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POETRY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.*

Though it be a truism to say that chronological divisions have no natural relation to the human events which take place in them, it is remarkable how often an epoch of thought or art appears to us as contained within a century. The coincidence is accidental and the accident takes accent from our temptation to show the feet of human change keeping step with the beats of time. But even if there were less of truth than there is in the suggested unison, it would still be convenient to shut off within the circumscription of a cycle the events contained in it, just as we are content to let a window make a framework to a section of landscape, even if the outline of a hillside may be curtailed, one stretch of woodland severed from another, or some reach of a river made to lose its continuity with the stream. Occasionally the severance works for fragment, but as often as not it involves a composition. So it is with history, and especially perhaps with the history of art; and at all events it is certain that in isolating thus the nineteenth century for the purpose of presenting the aspect of a cycle of English poetry, we do succeed in getting something like a com-

plete picture. It may be said, not unfairly, that the birth of the century was contemporaneous with that of a new poetic era, and that its close saw the exhaustion of the movement which its opening happened to inaugurate; and, with this assumption, we may hope that it will not be uninteresting to pass in review, partly for the sake of chronicle, but partly also for appreciation, the names of those who have made the chief show in verse from 1801 to 1900. We may well begin with a reflection with which we might appropriately end: the work of the period has been a redemption; from slovenliness we have risen to style; from vagueness to precision; from levity to earnestness; from triviality to high purpose; from convention to reality in feeling and thought. And, without venturing upon what would be a wide disquisition, we will content ourselves with ascribing—as to two great parent causes—the birth of so happy and so vast a change to the impulse of scientific discovery, and to the purifying fires kindled by the French Revolution.

The great poetic outburst which illumined our Elizabethan era, and has continued without a lull, though with much variation in volume and quality of light, ever since, came at so mature a point in the literary development of

* "The Victorian Anthology." Edited by Sir M. E. Grant Duff. London: Swan, Sonnenschein & Co. 1902.

Europe that it has been marked by two apparently contradictory characteristics. It has been at once derivative and individual. Derivative, because with Homer and such of his followers as have come down either in fragment or tradition, the Attic Tragedians, the Lyrist, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Dante, and Petrarch, all soliciting imitation and supplying models, it was impossible not to accept and digest the grand result of time. Individual, because with such a wilderness of choice before him, a poet was almost bound to follow his own bent, and to become epic, dramatic, lyric, classic, medieval, romantic, mystic, or a compound of some or all of these, as Nature made and bade him. And a capricious diversity was made all the easier because there was no academic and conservative public audience with its powerful traditions to coerce him, as at Athens, and no Imperial coterie to dictate his taste and subject-matter, as in Augustan Rome. Leaving out Shakespeare, who stands alone, as incapable of imitation as of approach, Marlowe, Jonson, Ford, Milton, Marvell, Denham, Congreve, Addison, Dryden, Swift, Pope, Goldsmith, to say less of Prior, Beattie, Collins, and the rest, had by the close of the eighteenth century provided their successors with a variety of native type and model, both in motive and treatment, unparalleled in the literature of any country. As it was with Adam and Eve on leaving Paradise, when

The world was all before them where
to choose
Their place of rest,

so it was with the poetical aspirants of the nineteenth century, and they accordingly scattered themselves over the whole domain. From the start onwards we have had satire, unalloyed, or as sauce to didactics; we have had tragedy, melodrama, comedy, lyrics,

one epic at least, a pretty natural daughter of the middle ages, in classic name and fancy dress, and thinking to dance her steps under the tuition of Apollonius Rhodius; we have also had a most remarkable series of epical cameos, most properly named Idylls, but esteemed by some as an Arthurian cycle; besides scores of truncated narrative, that sometimes recall the limits, and occasionally the topics, of Theocritus; and, lastly, we have had didactic gossip by the square yard, and introspective stanzas by the cartload.

For the multitudinous and no less multifarious poetic production of the last hundred years the spread of education has been largely responsible; and this through one of its thousand consequences, good and bad, that self-esteem which is apt to mistake taste for power, and the desire of achievement, which is so common a possession, for creative instinct, with which so few are dowered. The repeal of the paper duties, and the mechanical appliances which have cheapened production, have been contributory and facilitating causes. Something also must be laid to the charge of the many forms and devices of unscrupulous advertisement, to the recklessness, the lack of sense, and occasionally of conscience, in inferior criticism, not to do more than mention the pernicious habit of a group of authors reviewing one another in turn. But, just as true merit was never permanently obscured either by hostility or neglect, so no mediocrity has ever been made illustrious in the long run by unmerited laudation. It is certain, however, that after we have swept away the piles of rubbish which vanity has produced, and incompetence or dishonesty has recommended, the poetic work of the nineteenth century remains very splendid. A mere review of it, even without anything like an attempt to classify it or to account for it, is of supreme interest. Crabbe,

Campbell, Rogers, Southey, and Wordsworth may be said to have led off the procession. Two out of these five, Crabbe and Wordsworth, were something more than "considerable," and both of them may, one certainly will, prove to be immortal. It is a few of his small pieces such as "Hohenlinden," "The Mariners of England," "Lord Ullin's Daughter," "O'Connor's Child," and "The Battle of the Baltic," which give Campbell his chief title to renown. Of these "Hohenlinden" approaches nearest to greatness. Of "Lord Ullin's Daughter" it may almost be said that it is saved by its theme in spite of its treatment. "O'Connor's Child" is fantastic and secondary, and little better than a vamped-up reproduction of rags and tags from the store closets of the old ballads. As to the "Pleasures of Hope," what are they? Blameless no doubt, with a strong smack of the school exercise, and such a prophetic forecast of the Prize Poem as illustrates his own well-repeated dictum that

Coming events cast their shadows before.

Patches they have, and many, which are hardly purple, and filled they are with facile generalities, touches of conventional landscape and morality; they abound in platitudes most remotely connected with the pleasures of hope; and lastly they are interspersed with occasional flashes of outrageous hyperbole, of which one specimen is enough:

On Erie's banks where *Tigers* steal
along,
And the dread Indian chaunts a dismal
song;
Where human fiends on midnight er-
rands walk,
And bathe in brains the murderous toma-
hawk.

We trust that we may be forgiven for our italics.

The chief merit of Campbell is his blamelessness, and the literary modesty which saved him from such disastrous failures of over-vaulting ambition as made Southey the laughing-stock of every good judge from Porson and Byron until now. Of Rogers it is unnecessary to say more than that he was a cultivated gentleman who chose to employ a strenuous leisure in writing tolerable verse.

Crabbe, as he was infinitely superior to Campbell, so he more vividly recalls their common poetic ancestry. He is of the race of Pope, Dryden, Swift, Goldsmith, and Cowper. He may lack the philosophic insight, the neatness, the antithesis of the first, the rollick and burliness of the second, the causality, wit, and political grasp of the third, the grace of the fourth; but then, to make up for these deficiencies, he has been spared the matchless dreariness of the fifth, and there are moments when he shares the qualities of all. But he poured new wine into their old bottles, and he has a characteristic which differentiates him: his purpose was his own. It was at once sad and solemn; he was the first of our moderns to take seriously to heart, and consciously to write about, the suffering, temptations, difficulties, and degradation of the poor, urban and rural, as he knew them. This he did in no vague or reflective fashion, but in narratives drawn from concrete experience. The population of the Eastern Counties among whom he was bred, half agricultural and half seafaring, perhaps also in an especial degree the victims of material poverty and spiritual neglect, were eminently likely to awaken his sympathy and rouse his sense of wrong; while his opportunities of knowledge as he went among them, first as doctor and afterwards as clergyman, accentuated the influence of their condition upon his heart and brain. The outcome was such a

string of poems as "The Village," "The Parish Register," and "The Borough." These may not have added much to the graces of English poetry, any more than the pictures of Teniers did to the æsthetic beauty of painting. But they have directness of incident, firmness of touch, and distinctness of portraiture. In fact Crabbe was a serious, purposeful Teniers in verse; and so has perpetuated for us some of the many contemporary phases of poverty for which the generation among whom they were manifested will be held unwontedly responsible at the bar of history. His intent was somewhat akin to that of Wilkie in painting, and still more to that yearning towards the delineation of her own class and neighborhood which so soon afterwards produced the novels of Miss Austen. But no poems like his have since been attempted, and their predecessors, "The Deserted Village" and "Gray's Elegy," were both so far removed from them that we may fairly say of them that there is nothing "quid prius dicamus, nec viget quicquam simile aut secundum." Crabbe's powers were undoubtedly great enough to make his literary work permanently valuable as a picture of manners and a record of sentiment, although perhaps they were not great enough to place him very high among the poetic expositors of man's nature to man.

The contribution of Coleridge to the permanent literature of England is in very poor proportion to his genius. He must be classed among the first poets of the second order, that is to say of the order which comes next after the four Giants of Epic, Shakespeare and the three great Athenians; and yet he will be remembered by less of his work than will any undeniable master. It is indeed deplorable that the soul from which could emanate "Christabel," "Kubla Khan," "The Ancient Mariner," and the two great adaptations of Schiller, should have shed so

niggard a lustre upon the world. But so it is, and Coleridge can only be mourned as a shattered, half-redeemed prodigal, whose very creations cry out against him, and who for his wandering and self-waste must ever demand pardon of his kind.

Sir Walter Scott is an illustrious example of a man endowed with the highest genius who, having tried both, came to the conclusion that his natural vehicle of expression was prose, not verse. It would be incorrect to say that he never wrote a poem after the production of "Waverley," but his occasional relapses do not interfere with the fact of his resolve. And after all, as might be expected, it was wise. The world would not be so very much the poorer if "Marmion," "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," and "Rokeby" were to perish, but it will remain infinitely richer so long as "Old Mortality," "The Antiquary," "The Monastery," "The Legend of Montrose," "Quentin Durward," and a score at least of the other novels survive. Considering the swing and rapidity of the verse in his longer poems, it sounds strange to say that he perpetually fails to produce music in his shorter lyrics, but it is stranger still that nobody seems to have noticed the extreme clumsiness of many a line in some of the best known of them. To take one only, though dozens might be collected: can anything be worse than

"Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances"?

But, thank Heaven, the fame of Sir Walter has been otherwise won. Might it not be true to suggest that one reason why his poetry remained below his natural level was that he is one of the very few men who have risen to the height of literary greatness without fully belonging to, or being in keen sympathy with, their epoch? Far otherwise was it with the two poets whose

names stand next on the roll. Byron and Shelley were set on fire by the French Revolution. It illumines "Manfred," "Childe Harold," and "Cain," "Prometheus Unbound" and "The Revolt of Islam," and is the cause of many another less valuable effort of the two masters, especially of each in his more palpably satirical mood. It is questionable whether either Byron or Shelley has had, or ever will have, accurate justice done to him. The lightning of their genius was too highly tinted by the more unpopular and less abiding colors of an epoch whose effervescence was checked by a reaction which wreaked vengeance upon all the most openly avowed products of the period against which it set itself to war. It was the cant of the "twenties" and "thirties" to dismiss Byron as false and sensual, and Shelley as a dangerous atheist. To the half-blind preachers of this unwarranted rejection the lordly self-presentation of such a nature as Byron's, its alternate flash and gloom, its masterly grasp of Nature in her most stupendous moods, the rhetoric which could roll audible thunder among the summits of Alps, fling sunbeams adown their valleys, sparkle over their falls and torrents, and sweep along their clouds, were all as naught. They could see nothing but what their littleness left them free to ridicule or dislike, loathe or dread; and their position is all the more provoking because they were right in their judgment of what they could see. Among things that irritate, it is as prominent as it is true that the lower nature which looks at the higher from below is apt only to catch sight of its baser parts and qualities; but it does catch those. The names of Byron and Shelley have been more commonly associated than those of any two other poets. The reasons for this are obvious. They were both of them, to begin with, of gentle birth,

and—we say it with deference to those who might think otherwise—their poetry was largely influenced by their rank, though in varying extent and fashion. They were both, too, what one of them called "exiles of the heart" as well as of the home. The conjunction of these two accidents added recklessness to Byron, intensity to Shelley. It wrung "Alastor" and "Prometheus" from the one, "Manfred" and "Don Juan" from the other. These were indeed widely sundered products, but it must be remembered that Shelley also wrote "Swellfoot the Tyrant," just as Byron wrote "The Vision of Judgment," and that if Shelley gave us his delicate Laments and Romances we are all much the richer for "The Dream." Social isolation was in both of them the cause of a common defect, in which, however, we once more see the difference of their temperament conspicuously working. Each of them in his own way from lack or contempt of criticism falls in style. In Byron this is most apparent in the want of what is called "finish," and in the vain facility with which he allowed his "rubbish" to go forth to the world. It is impossible to charge such a worker as he was with commonplace idleness, and so it seems better to lay to his account a moral lethargy which made him careless of his true fame. He never seemed to treat his creative faculty, or what came of it, as a reserved chamber of his nature to be kept swept and garnished, whatever came of the rest. He wrote indeed:

I hope to be remembered in my line
With my land's language,

but the desire was not fervent enough to carry him beyond the poorer result inevitable to his native powers. If only the conscientious labor of a Tennyson had been possible to him, what a manifestation he would have made!

The social isolation of Shelley was

even more complete than that of Byron. Byron was at least in correspondence with Rogers, Moore, Broughton, John Murray, and a host of others from whom he had to endure valuable protest and counsel which were not altogether without fruit. But Shelley had no one to criticise or advise him. His circle was small, and it only lifted hands of adoration. His main defect was exuberance, and he had no one to apply or even to recommend the pruning-knife. How infinitely the "Prometheus" would have gained if somebody could have persuaded him to reduce it by at least one-fourth of its mere bulk. There is too much of everything after the first act, which, however, is faultless; too much Zeus, too much Demogorgon, too many pine trees singing interminably "old songs with new gladness," too many "voices of spirits o'er land and o'er sea." There are even too many of the lyrics in the fourth act, divine as are some of them; and there is far too much of an ill-defined, half-imagined millennium, which might be rest to an over-fatigued Titan, but which only takes casual account of anybody else. But may we be forgiven for seeming to complain that these two great human bestowals were not better than they were.

Near to them in the "Castello," but somewhat apart, like "the lonely Saladin," there sits a quieter figure. He left the world so soon, and with so little done, though some of that little be of the highest, that the world can hardly estimate him. It may mourn him, but it cannot judge him. The promise of his "Endymion" gleams through its faulty shape, and survives its frequent clumsiness of epithet and its crude versification. If it contained nothing else of value than that splendid symphony in words of which the first theme begins:

Oh, sorrow, why dost borrow,

and after two other magnificent measures comes back at last to the melody with which it started, the poem itself would be stamped with immortality. Half a dozen of the "Sonnets," "Lamia," the lines to "Autumn," "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," and beyond all these the "Ode to a Nightingale," and "Lines on a Grecian Urn," are credentials enough for a youth who died at twenty-six. But, as we have already said, you cannot place Keats, because you cannot tell what would have become of him.

It would be gross ingratitude to one of the caterers for the delight of his boyhood if a survivor of the last generation were to forget to mention with affectionate remembrance the name of Thomas Moore. If a school-boy were to try to picture the sort of regard which the thought of him calls up in his elders, it would resemble that which he himself might feel for a family friend who was wont to confer upon him occasional sovereigns. Dear, chubby, little old Anacreon! He could sing to us of love and wine without doing us any harm. How we felt for him when he sang

The days are gone when Beauty bright
My heart-strings wove.

The more, perhaps, because we could not quite realize the operation. And how glad we were to hear—our own locks being still brown and our cheeks ruddy—that it was possible for him and his olden contemporaries, although

The snowfall of Time might be stealing
 ing

over their brows,

Like Alps in the sunset, when lighted
 by wine
To wear the gay tinge of Youth's roses
 again.

And how thoroughly we agreed with him, having some grumpy mathemati-

cal master or fruit-withholding gardener
in our mind's eye, when he broke out—

Only think what a world we should
have of it here.

If the haters of peace, of affection
and glee,

Were to fly off to Saturn's comfortless
sphere,

Leaving Earth to such spirits as you,
Boys, and me.

It is true that he wrote "Love," not
"Boys," but we used to take the liberty
of making an undoubted emendation
in our own favor. Then did he not
teach us "The Minstrel Boy"? How
real as well as noble we thought the
lad, and how our breasts swelled with
sacred pity when we heard that

The Minstrel fell!—but the foeman's
chain

Could not bring his proud soul under;
The harp he loved ne'er spoke again
For he tore its cords asunder.

We endorsed that last act of the poor
little hero, without pausing to think—
seeing what is the toughness of catgut
—how very trying a feat it must have
been for his relaxing fingers. Then,
when we had grown somewhat older,
when sentiment, with its gratuitous
but very real sadness, had begun to
work in us, how grateful we were for
such lines as

No, not more welcome the fairy num-
bers

Of music fall on the sleeper's ear,
When, half awaking from fearful slum-
bers,

He dreams the full quire of heaven is
near,

Than came that voice when all forsaken

This heart long had sleeping lain,
Nor deemed its cold pulse, &c., &c.

By the time that such tender catas-
trophes had lost something of their
original poignancy, had not Lalla
Rookh already grown dear to us? Did
we not rejoice over the hoodwinking of
Fadladeen? And were we not—wicked

young puppies—uncertain whether we
were glad or sorry that the seductive
king's messenger, the mysterious and
handsome singer of romantic stories,
who beguiled the long journey as he
rode beside the litter of his master's
bride, should turn out to be her be-
trothed himself, so that there was noth-
ing like naughtiness or irregularity in
the loves of Feramorz and Lalla Rookh
after all? And how our hearts had
ached over "The Fire-Worshippers,"
and the sweet lament for Hinda at the
close of that poem. Poor Tom Moore,
what Fame will end by doing with you
we do not care to enquire; we trust
that you may even now be sipping your
nectar and water, cooled to a consolatory
point, in the company of Anacreon
and a pleasant group of the Anthologists.
It may be that no future
generation of old fellows will be grate-
ful to you, or recall, when they think
of you, the merriment and little heart-
aches of their youth. We suppose that
our grandchildren will have merriment
and heart-aches, but will they have a
Tom Moore also? We, at all events,
not foreseeing either their temperament
or their destiny, will return thanks for
having had you. As for your politics,
or your satire, we knew very little
about them, and cared less; they may
possibly have amused our elders.

The Reactionaries were assisted in
the tilt which they ran against Byron
and Shelley by the contrast of the de-
cent life and calm genius of Words-
worth, seated remote and contempla-
tive among the hills and vales of the
Lake country. There he was, in honest
communion with Nature, and, save for
an occasional outburst of judicial in-
dignation, breathing nothing but resig-
nation and content, while the others
were storming in vain fever and fury,
and flaunting a somewhat ostentatious
violation of what they affected to mis-
take and despise. The range of
thought in Wordsworth, his rustic dig-

nity, his power of seeing the true poetry in common things, his gentle unaffected mysticism, and his simple method of expressing it, are qualities so well and so long acknowledged in him that, except in an historic sketch, it would be too late to call attention to them. But even now it may be worth while to recur to his love for the poor and his reverence for woman. His poor are not the shepherds and shepherdesses of earlier sentimentalists; they are living, working, loving, thinking human creatures, with sins, virtues, and sufferings of their own, not to be pitied, blamed, or loved one whit more or less than their betters, and affording equal food for the contemplative poet or the humane philosopher. What we might call the "village" stanzas of Gray's "Elegy" form a shorthand registration of a vast amount of Wordsworth's poems; and to the minds and tastes of many the multiplicity and elaboration of concrete instances by the later poet grow wearisome in comparison with the brief and easy summary of the elder. Possibly so voluminous a writer as Wordsworth suffers from attempts to read too much of him at one time. There seems in him a reiteration of subject, in which minute shades of distinction merge into dreariness, and beget a monotony of treatment which has, perhaps, no minute shades to lose. His unchanging simplicity is apt to pall, like the bread diet of the poor of whom he loved to sing. But his worship of women is as supreme as it is simple. It would be unfair to it to say that it has been achieved by no one else, for it is clearly innate in the man; it is not an achievement, it is an intuition. In the days of duelling it would have been unsafe to give a full and true expression of our opinion to his face of the man to whom the "Lucy" poems did not appeal.

Among the worthier workers of the

second rank George Darley must not be forgotten. He was not great; he had no mission; and, unfortunately for him, he arose at a moment when men were for asking, with a new directness, of all who proposed themselves for fame, "What have you come to teach?" His impulse was secondary, his style derivative. He savored, now of the Elizabethans, now of Milton, now of Shelley, and now of Keats. His method was inartistic. He had nothing of his own to say, but he remembered what others had said before him, and he piped away to their airs, sometimes almost as they would have done it themselves, and always prettily, because he was like them. He was an echo, faint, but not unfascinating. Of his two best known works, the Fairy drama "Sylvia" and "Nepenthe," we prefer the former. Darley's merits may be said to be those of an anthologist on a large scale, and that is as far as one can go in recalling him.

Another strange and half-formed genius who broke into a brief show of prominence along with Darley was Thomas Lovell Beddoes. He had more of strength and less of grace than Darley, but his light was, like that of his friend, planetary, and his work purposeless. Such fame as he had was equally fugitive, and the kindly attempt of his late editor to revive him has, as in Darley's case, failed. Yet both in "The Bride's Tragedy" and in that so-called of "The Fool" there is poetry, and in his fragments, especially in those of "Death's Jest Book," Beddoes scintillates at times with some thought or expression, some little half-gleam of self-revelation, which seems to hint at a mind that never shone with its full power. It may be that real madness lay at the root of his imperfection, for his life was eccentric and unaccountable, and he died a suicide.

As to the value of a certain contemporary of Darley and Beddoes, we

could wish that we were more heartily in accord with critics to whose judgment we should be glad to subordinate our own. But we cannot affect an unfeigned admiration, and we can only present the long drama of "Joseph and his Brethren," by Charles Wells, as a work which many persons highly competent to judge have as highly praised. It does not seem to us that the touching old tale has gained anything by its elaboration. In the reprint of 1876 it occupies some 252 pages of considerably more than twenty lines apiece on an average. Its first act alone is about as long as most of Shakespeare's plays, and there are four of them. The composition consists of little else than a series of sermons preached upon texts supplied by the main incidents of the story. Reuben's lecture to his brothers on their treatment of Joseph occupies some three hundred lines at least, and is only broken by ejaculatory sentences from one or other of his ten listeners. The disquisitions upon cruelty, mercy, pity, patience, ambition, and—as soon as Phraxanor, Potiphar's wife, and the only female character, comes on the scene—upon lust, love, honesty, duty, and God's providence, are surely unredeemed by originality. Phraxanor herself falls immeasurably below the Phædra of Euripides, and adds nothing to the Phædre of Racine. Perhaps the truest apology for the poem is that the work was that of a very young man.

Among the strong men of his generation who deliberately adopted verse, very few were more deliberate in their adoption or stronger in their use of it than Walter Savage Landor. He did not hesitate between prose and verse, but he oscillated between them as a man may between a town and a country house. With now a play, now some "Imaginary Conversations," now an epic, he turned backwards and forwards from one to another with a

lordly alternation too magnificent to be called caprice. His power in both directions no man may call in question, but there is an indescribable difference between poetic genius and such power. As a boy, he was a precocious scholar, and, when he could be persuaded to try, he produced Latin and Greek verses, original and in translation, which were the bewilderment, and more than once provoked the envy, of his teachers. But his waywardness and wilfulness were as transcendent as his aptitudes, and he was as a lazy animal that will not put forth its strength. Later on, with like irregularity, he chose his own models, and invented his own methods. Though he studied Dante, he undervalued him on the score of his medievalism. He idolized Milton, whose mightiness in music appealed to him; probably from analogy he would have loved Handel as a musical composer. As a poet we may admire his elevation of style and his intellectual pride, which, scorning small subjects, held itself aloof from playfulness in metre, tricksiness in fancy, triviality in sentiment. We may acknowledge that he never dandled a commonplace, and that he avoided poetical doll-dressing, with all the thousand and one prettinesses in which too many, who ought to have known better, have either courted popularity among half-cultivated coteries, or stooped to solicit the applause of the mob. But it would be difficult to own that he ever moves us; we leave him as calm and unexcited as he is himself. Even his landscape is not vivid; he has not fed his reverence with it like Wordsworth, mastered it like Milton, or assimilated it as Byron did that of Spain, of the Alps, and, above all, of Italy. He cannot bid Nature sing, as Shelley did, ode upon ode of her own making. In short, he is not an evangelist. He had not that kind of self out of which, after all, Gospels are made.

And so he remains, colossal, impressive, like a ruin whose purpose is unknown, and from which we turn not without wonderment, but unstirred by reverence, sympathy, or affection. Half a dozen of Shakespeare's sonnets, Byron's "Isles of Greece," Shelley's "Sky-lark," and the "Ode to a Nightingale" of Kents are, any one of them, worth a wilderness of "Gebirs" or "Hellenics," fine as these may be. We may admit Landor's stateliness of diction, though this is not so much native as derived. We may acknowledge his power of creating weird situations, but what is there either in his subjects or his treatment of them that satisfies or seduces us? Does he feel, or make us feel, what he writes? Grievously as we may revolt from much that we find in Byron or Shelley, at least we feel that they felt, and thence comes the touch of Nature that makes us akin to them. Not so with Landor.

Perhaps the lowest depths beneath style were plumbed by Wordsworth, just as its high-water mark was habitually paced by his immediate successor in the primacy of English poetry. We reserve the expression "grand style" to express the majesty of verse, say, in Milton and Virgil, but that is a matter apart. We employ the term "style" for a more general purpose. It conveys the idea of masterly elevation of manner, of an inevitable form of phrase, of chasteness in rhythm, of caution in expression, and of a general finish and polish in work. Now, in all these, especially when his volume, his range of subject, and his multiplicity of metre are considered, we hold Tennyson to have been supreme. As he ranges below the majesty of Milton, so he cannot be said to have caught and reproduced the inmost melodies of verse like Shelley, while the rhetoric of Byron he may consciously have shunned. But style, as representing the conscientious handicraft of a master deter-

mined to send forth nothing slipshod, common, or unclean, he certainly had and used as no Englishman has ever had or used it. He represents in this respect a staglike bound of our poetry out of the wilds of the rough and the unkempt into a smooth, well-shaven lawn of gardenlike order. It was natural that such a method should be allied to a receptive rather than to a creative mind. Imagination he had, and fancy in abundance, and he relied upon the latter more, perhaps, than on the former. His constructive faculty was not large. The consequence of this last limitation, so long as he remained conscious of it, was his love for short pieces. None of his poems up to and inclusive of those published in 1842 is 500 lines long. "In Memoriam" is but a wondrous collection of pearls strung together. Very few of its odes are absolutely essential to one another. They follow in fair sequence, though rather like separate stones in an ungraduated necklace; but it requires some ingenuity to plead a general design. So it is with the "Idylls of the King"; the connection between these is confined to the reappearance, ever and anon, of the same personages. In short, Tennyson was a carver of cameos, which he set in a blank matrix. But, then, what gems these cameos are! The two exceptions, outside the dramas, are "The Princess" and "Maud." "The Princess" especially stands apart. Its story is consecutive, directly told, and is constructed without flaw, but it is slight. Still, as a production, especially taking size into consideration, we are inclined to put it as high as anything he ever did. Perhaps its excellence is partly owed to an element of jocularity, to the fact that it was originally started for fun; this feeling, working unconsciously in its author all through it, may have given him a sense of ease and freedom. Certainly he does touch the serious sub-

jects involved in it with a surer hand than elsewhere. Absolute seriousness of approach towards the highest is apt to work hesitancy and a want of precision, sometimes even of courage and candor. There are few minds in the whole history of literature that have been equal to this test. A little ripple of laughter, however restrained, evades the difficulty, and leaves success complete. Of "Maud," in spite of its many beauties, we had rather not say much. It has been called its author's masterpiece. After much reflection, we take leave to doubt this. Its subject is needlessly disagreeable. Its hero provokes no sympathy; its heroine is a phantom, a statue for Pygmalion to write verses to. The brother and the lordling are unfair caricatures. It is immortalized by some exquisite fragments, such as the garden song, the apostrophe to the Swainston cedar, many lines of the song that begins "Oh, that t'were possible After long grief and pain," and the nautilus. But it is defaced by metres here and there that are positively ugly, and by satire that is unexciting because too often undeserved. Of Tennyson perhaps the last word to say is this: Outside and below the group of the very grandest, he is the most perfect and companionable of poets, and will be remembered by an unusual quantity of his work. He will stand forever in the history of English literature as the champion who refound and rescued the lost Lady of Style. His aim was always lofty; he never wrote a line, much less conceived a poem, that should express himself at the expense of his readers. He never laughed, at or with society, the laugh which corrupts while it affects to censure. It was not in him to gloze over the commonplaces of lust, or to elaborate the portraiture of great crimes with a half-concealed admiration; he could never have written his own apology, or excused his readers' fascination

as did the author of "Monsieur de Camors" when he bade farewell to his adulterous traitor and suicide with the words, "Sans doute un grand coupable, mais qui pourtant fut un homme." No "Cencis," no "Beppos," no "Don Juans" for him; though perhaps he did spend too much time over the episode of Launcelot and Guinevere, and though his fame would not have suffered if he had abstained from the somewhat nambly-pamby love-making of Rosamund and Henry. Let us forget these blemishes of substance, with here and there a false experiment in form; they are but a few specks in the crop of rich fruit which the garden of his soul has borne for the world; let us turn them lovingly to the bottom of the basket. The poetry of the nineteenth century culminated in him, and, fitly, in the very noontide of its own course. He may be said, in his own words,

To sit a star upon the sparkling spire,
and there is none to dispute his throne
with him.

Side by side and almost year for year with the great laureate there was working a man whose genius was at once the contrast and a complement of his own. Browning's method was not so much a negative lack of style as a positive rejection of it. His magnificent imagination, his intellectual force, his instinct for a fine subject, his love for and mastery over landscape, his penetration into the devious passages and closed chambers of human nature, are all undoubted; but so are his willfulness, his roughness, his unliterary avoidance of simplicity, his love of leaving his reader, and perhaps sometimes himself, lost in half-lights of intention, and half-thridded mazes of unexpounded philosophy. His burlesque and muscularity found acceptance with many persons not too capable of appreciating his highest qualities, but who fancied that they had found in

him satisfaction for a lack of virility which they had imputed to Tennyson simply because he was delicate and clear. Many such mistook his obscurity itself for profundity, thinking that what they could not plumb must needs be deep. A host of the admirers of "Sordello" irresistibly recall that old Northumbrian story of the night-wanderer who stumbled into one of the hundreds of disused shafts in the mining district, but, managing to catch hold of the bank as he fell, maintained himself with foot and hand, shouting the while for help. He is said to have been dragged out shaking and chattering in his agony; and it was found that, had he but known it, his toes were only a few inches from the bottom. But Browning must not be undervalued because silly folk have raved about him. He will pass his immortality in the company of his great rival and contemporary; propped, it may be, upon a somewhat lower bed of amaranth or moly, though very close at hand. Because nonsense has been talked about "Paracelsus" we need not forget "Strafford," "Pippa Passes," "Saul," "Rabbi ben Ezra," "How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix," and, above and beyond all else of his, large or small, the matchless and priceless "Rings and the Book." But great as he was he cannot be wholly forgiven, even by the most grateful of us, for the perversity which elected to scorn the use of good handicraft in the shaping of fine thought. Whoever the jeweler may be, he has no right to set diamonds in mud.

At Browning's own side for many years sat and wrote his gifted but artistically deficient wife. The long romance of their joint lives, and the unquestioning worship of her husband, threw for a while an undue lustre upon the work of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The chastisement inflicted upon a still living critic, who at the

time of her death indulged himself with a flippant remark in violation of good taste and feeling, but which is not now more worthy of repetition than it was originally of punishment, is still remembered by the readers of "Pacchiarotto." The voice of the militant husband is silent now, but we may express the verdict of a later generation without irreverence or cowardice on the one hand, or the risk of undeserved affront on the other. A love of paradox in the reading public contributed to the undue esteem in which, at one time, the productions of the poetess were held. It pleased people to say that the gray mare was the better horse. We remember these very words in the pages of an eminent Review. But though it was ludicrous to look upon Mrs. Browning as the rival or superior of her greater husband, her claims to consideration are beyond cavil. She had feeling, romance, wit, picturesqueness, thoughtfulness occasionally rising into wisdom, and landscape; but none of these qualities was hers in a superlative degree. "Aurora Leigh" exhibits her range and her limitations. It is a novel in verse, yet its story is undigested and improbable, and its incidents are so overlaid with that intellectual gossip to which both she and her husband were regrettably prone, that it is next to impossible to pick them out as one goes along. They are jerked in as though she were on the point of forgetting them, and as if they were things only worth mentioning, as it were, by the way. The narrative portion of the poem does not occupy ten per cent. of its dimensions. The rest is made up of reflections, sometimes excellent, but in the main tedious and trite. The plot is rather like a story by George Eliot, but a story whose every merit the novelist would have transcended, and from the absurdities and crudities of which she would have steered clear. The worst

poetic defect of "Aurora Leigh" is its abominable versification. From its long stretch of some eleven thousand lines one might bring forward a hundred examples. In fact, her artistic taste was Mrs. Browning's weakest point. Her lyric metres are often as faulty as her blank verse. They jingle themselves at times into something very like vulgarity. Their music is that of the guitar or the harp at their best; at their worst it is that of the banjo. Yet she must have read the best models. Shelley and, later on, Tennyson were at her command; but she must have turned from them without true study. Perhaps she loved to imitate her husband's perversities. Perhaps he encouraged her—he would certainly not correct her—and she still remained under the expiring lyric tastelessness of the generation that preceded her. Still, with all her shortcomings in art she was a grand manifestation of the woman who revered womanhood, and who conceived that her mission was to hold up the best in it at once as a standard for her own sex, and as a plea and protest to ours. So let us forgive much that is weak, much that is rough, much that is even tawdry if looked at from the artistic side alone. She was voluminous beyond measure, and, like some of her betters at the craft, would probably have written much better if she had written far less. One would have been glad to rub out some twenty thousand of her lines, and then to set her to work to polish and chasten the rest.

With Browning and Mrs. Browning we take leave of the two last great sinners against style. Tennyson, Patmore, Arnold, and Swinburne have all been thoroughly conscientious in form, phrase, and general workmanship. Arnold may have been dry and without a large stock of melodies; Patmore over-frugal and over-chastened; the trill of Swinburne exuberant, repeti-

tive, over-prolonged. But with all of them their strings are ever in tune, and they never touch their instrument with a slack or slovenly hand. As to Arnold, we have heard it said by many folk that to them his work was altogether satisfying; but the remark has generally been made by those who have had an undoubted cross of the prig in them. There is a staid manliness of thought, a carefully pruned nicety of expression everywhere. In "Thyrsis" and "The Scholar Gipsy" there is a note struck of honest love and genuine regret. But the magical power of grief-begetting grief, the poignancy which stabs while the verse enchants, the haunting lights and shadows of a suggested passion which hold the memory enslaved, are not there. One can set down anything of Arnold's with a "This is uncommonly good," and that is fatal. It may be urged that something of this sort is true even of Milton's "Lycidas." If so, it springs of a common artificiality. But then "Lycidas" is ablaze with lines that have an immortality and perfection of their own, apart from the amber in which they are embedded. There is nothing of that sort in "Thyrsis" or "The Scholar Gipsy," and they are Arnold at his best.

Of Clough much has been written because more has been felt. To a large group of friends who mourned his comparatively early death his poems were made sacred by memory. They loved his work as they had loved him. But to us, who come to a view of him when the mists of regret have floated away, a colder and soberer judgment appears the truer. He was a dweller upon the borderland of genius, and intellectually was picturesque, but unkempt, like the landscape of the moor edges. Earnest and humorous, and, if unpolished, altogether manly and genuine, his figure suggests that of a respectable *Salvator Rosa*, or,

to take a modern parallel from prose fiction, of a Warrington who wrote verse. He was inept alike in form and diction. He had no more mastered his vehicle than he had tamed his intellect. He held neither of them in hand. His difficulties in art were exactly mated to the perplexities of a soul in flux. But he belongs to the "living minds" of the century, and he exemplifies its variety, even if he has not contributed much to its achievement.

Of such writers as Aubrey de Vere and Sir Henry Taylor it would be impossible for any lover of good literature to speak without respect. Sir Henry Taylor's noble poem "Phillip van Artevelde" in its day almost took the world by storm; but neither that play nor "Edwin the Fair" has retained its hold upon the reading public. As with De Vere's "Alexander the Great" and "St. Thomas of Canterbury" the poet failed in the instinct to make choice of topics which selze. We do not, however, place these works upon the same plane; each of Sir Henry Taylor's rising to a height not attained, and possessing an attractiveness not shared, by either of the other two. The Irish chronicles which Mr. de Vere so laboriously put into verse are but dreary reading, and he further fails to make interesting the Medieval Records or the Legends of Saxon Saints. This, perhaps, may be owing to the Roman Catholicism which can provoke at best only sectarian sympathy. The workmanship, however, is always good, and is always that of a cultivated gentleman. Some of the smaller pieces and sonnets are gems which for years to come will brighten the pages of many an anthology.

The excursions of Charles Kingsley into verse were so infrequent, and the total result of them so small, that, but for his excellent quality, we should

hardly treat him as a claimant for poetic honors. The "Saint's Tragedy" we may put aside; it is half prose, and even when in verse it seems to lay no stress on its own assumption of the clothes of Poetry. "Andromeda" is constrained and stunted, as every subject must be which, classic in origin, suffers doubly from being treated in a classic metre. Modern readers fight shy of Greek subjects, and there they are wrong; still less will they attack Greek metres, but there they are right. Kingsley strikes a tenderer and more alluring note in his ballads. "The Sands of Dee," "The Three Fishers," "The Starlings," "Airly Beacon," the two poignant stanzas of "A Lament," and "Earl Haldane's Daughter," which in the volume of the collected poems is only called "A Song," are each and all delightful. He is careless in rhyme and metre, but his is not a vulgar carelessness. Wise people, who value true pathos, and welcome the reappearance, even *en déshabillé*, of the good old ballad forms, will take the best of Charles Kingsley's little poems to their hearts, and keep them there.

Macaulay is another commanding figure to whom poetry was merely "parergon"—to Anglicise a convenient Greek word—but whose sparse produce, like the widow's famous cruse, will last a long time. His "Lays of Ancient Rome" are undeniable. We have been told that we may call them what we please, so long as we do not call them poetry. But what are they, then? They are written in admirable verse, and verse which is in itself a perfectly fresh mood of ballad metre; and they are hardly the worse for a smoothness which does not destroy their swing or their virility. Roman spirit and the religion of old Rome, set in true Italian scenery, pervade them; and pathos, though kept in hand almost throughout, is occasionally let loose in them; while the whole group

is made to subserve modern feeling and purpose. These qualities have made them popular, and if they do not also together make up poetry, it is not easy to say what does. Still, Macaulay cannot be called a poet in the broader sense, for he was but a brief sojourner, a tourist in the realms of song; his native soil and natural habitat was prose.

Very much apart from his fellows, and that owing to a mental loneliness which was to him half a creed, worked Coventry Patmore. A speculator almost fantastic upon spiritual things; a mystic theorist upon life and conduct; proud and soaring, with a touch of the saint in him, and a snap of the eagle, too; manly in talk, and at times almost tyrannous in attitude; such he was, and such he would have claimed to be. His poetry was gentle and refined to a fault, and it spent itself so largely upon the delineation of over-delicate shades of feeling, and within so circumscribed a range of scenery and incident, that it was voted tasteless by the multitude. But he was a poet of a high order. If constricted, he was from the first conscious of his limitations, and when he had exhausted the vein which he set himself to work, he ceased to produce altogether. Then the mental solitude in which he had long elected to live brought about in him something of that sterility which comes of isolation. "The Angel in the House" is full of beauty; so are "Amelia" and "Tamer-ton Church Tower." In the last two the influence of Coleridge is traceable, whom, when at his best and highest, and that unhappily was but seldom, Patmore was wont to extol. "The Unknown Eros" lacks charm, because it is without that explicability which, after all, is essential to charm. But the character of Jane, Frederick Graham's humble little wife, in the "Angel in the House," forms one of the clearest

and most pathetic studies in modern fiction, prose or verse.

An episode in the literary firmament of the "fifties" was the rising and setting of Alexander Smith. That a young man should have written such a first book, and afterwards nothing half so good, was a bewilderment. Perhaps, however, we do not allow a sufficient analogy between man's mind and material phenomena. A morning dawns blazing with sunlight and the beauties that are born of it; long ere noon there comes an eclipse of mist and gloom, and the day never recovers itself. So it is sometimes with genius; it dawns, flushes, and dies out in dulness. But was Alexander Smith's vein genius after all? A late re-reading of "A Life Drama" begets doubt. Was there more than a great receptiveness? Is not the whole thing a series of echoes crossing and recrossing one another, now of Keats, now of Byron, and now of Tennyson? Was there more than an extreme facility of picking up and imitating methods of fancy, moods of feeling, turns of expression—in fact, the tricks of the poet's trade? Whatever it was, it was well done enough to deceive the very elect, not excepting the last Master left alive from whom the inspiration of imitation came.

As we float down the stream let us not forget to turn our boat into the pleasant backwater whereby dwells the simple, genuine, unambitious, and unobtrusive Barnes. Local he was, even to the dialect which makes him difficult to many and impossible to more; but to the few who overcome he is undeniably precious. After all, Theocritus was provincial in speech and subject, and Wordsworth eminently local; and Barnes had some of the qualities of both those masters. Like them, he saw the poetry in rural poverty, and was not above being the evangelist of rural life, manners, hu-

mor, and feeling. He saw with, felt with, jested with, wept with the rustics of Dorsetshire, just as did Theocritus with the peasants of Sicily and Peloponnesus, and Wordsworth—except the jesting—with the “statesmen” and farm-laborers of Cumberland and Westmoreland. He had not, indeed, the genius of the other two; but, all the same, we take leave to doubt whether either of them ever wrote a better little poem than “Woak Hill.”

We now come to two poets, William Morris and Rossetti, whom we class together because they both represent that yearning “*reculer pour mieux sauter*” which started the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in painting, and such poems as their own in literature. As painters and poets both, they illustrate each phase of the movement. We should be unaffectedly sorry for the person who could tell us after trial that he did not enjoy “The Life and Death of Jason” and “The Earthly Paradise,” or the songs and ballads in Morris’s first volume. How “The Tune of Seven Towers,” “The Eve of Crecy,” “The Sailing of the Sword,” and a dozen other sweet things hold one’s memory! And what a promise—perhaps not quite fulfilled—was there in the fragment called “Sir Peter Harpdon’s End.” It may be said that all his poems, great and small, are but reproductions, even if they can be trusted to be that, of gone forms of life and feeling, and even of affectations that were superseded by a healthier renaissance. It may be that there is too much of what we may dub Bot-ticellism in the composition of Morris, as there was in that of many of those who felt and worked with him. We may blame him for never having extricated himself from his medievalism, for having “*reculé*” but never having “*sauté*.” But what he has given us is very beautiful, and, for ourselves, we accept it with gratitude. We acknowl-

edge the presence of the pearls, and we decline, because they may not be altogether fit for daily food, to wish that they had been barleycorns. To our thinking the worst charge against Morris is his pessimism, his hate and dread of the inevitable end, and the hopelessness with which he persists in looking on life as the vestibule of death.

If genius might be said to consist in doing what a man sets himself to do surpassingly well, as well perhaps as it could have been done, then Rossetti had genius of the first order. But if it be truer to say that genius consists in doing with supreme excellence things that are of enduring benefit to mankind, then Rossetti must be relegated to a lower level. We all remember how we were dazzled by “The Blessed Damozel,” “Sister Helen,” “Troy Town,” and the Sonnets. Nor have we forgotten “The White Ship,” “Rose Mary,” or “The King’s Tragedy.” For “The House of Life,” in spite of its fine handicraft, and its delicate shades of thought and feeling, we have a slighter sense of gratitude. Throughout almost all of Rossetti’s work, however, there runs one and the same unpleasant influence, the sense of moral and nervous decadence. We think that this must be confessed, though we are far from admitting the charge to the extent to which it is urged by an eminent foreign critic. Still the canker is there. It is a vice akin to the pernicious theory of Art for Art’s sake, which seems to us to be the begetter of things abominable in literature, sculpture, and painting alike. We may all enjoy Rossetti’s work from “The Blessed Damozel” down to “Jenny”—alas, we are but mortal and are prone to feast where we should not—but how many really wholesome dishes has he offered us besides “The King’s Tragedy”?

Each of the gifted women who wrote-

their novels under the names of George Elliot, and Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell, yielded to the charm which compels so large a troop of sensitive natures. In "Jubal" and "The Spanish Gypsy" George Elliot made two serious attempts to justify a claim to the coveted name of poet. Of "Jubal" nothing need be written. As to "The Spanish Gypsy" one may permit oneself an expression of regret that instead of a story manacled in verse which is seldom more than tolerable, which never soars, and is too often pedestrian, the writer did not use her materials to give us, as she might have done, in her native fashion, a glorious novel in admirable prose. George Elliot, posing as a poet, provides a literary analogue to the Apteryx among birds: she has everything but the wings, and cannot fly. As to the verse of the sisters Brontë, it was on its first appearance not unnaturally overvalued. None of us could forget the novels, and but few of us were not aware in some measure of the sadness and dreary romance of the three lives. Sympathy often passes into admiration, and in many a loving heart the two are confused from the first. But after a careful re-perusal, it is impossible to see much more in the collection than might have been achieved by dozens of cleverish daughters of rural clergymen; and, strangely enough, Currer Bell's pieces seem to be the least meritorious.

Both Jean Ingelow and Miss Rossetti have done more interesting and distinctive work. The first named, especially, treats from time to time her delicately chosen and daintily handled subjects with a gentleness and womanly grace that go far to subdue the reader. For instance, overprolonged as it is, "High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire" is a monument of pathos, and instinct with the dreary life of the people of the fens.

If George Meredith were as victorious over us with his verse as he is with his prose, he would be the most triumphant "of our Conquerors." But as a poet he falls into one of two pits: he either loses his idiosyncrasy, and becoming clear he is tame, or else, beginning to speak in his own tongue, he is untamable. We bear with him in his prose because what his style partly veils is so splendid. His wit, his wisdom, his plastic power and his own joy in it, all gleam out on us through the interjected photosphere of his perversities. These we forgive to him, and only greet an unusually tough paragraph or chapter with an affectionate oath. But though we can bear that our prose should be somewhat over *purée*, we must have the turtle of our poetry clear; so we say to him, we hope not ungratefully, "Introduce us to more Egoists, let Richard Feverel undergo fresh ordeals, make Shagpat shave himself afresh, negotiate for us another Marriage however Amazing, but let 'Modern Love' and 'The Joys of Earth' alone."

Probably few poets of any age, certainly none among our moderns, have started upon the path of fame with so fair a promise as that which was given by "Atalanta in Calydon." Mr. Swinburne took us by storm. The youth who could present a famous but very difficult old myth with the fearlessness and good faith which illumined his poem, and who was capable of writing the best passages in its choruses, to say nothing of a great deal of the blank verse, fully justified the acclamations which greeted him. If Mr. Swinburne has not developed quite commensurately, it is not because he was chilled, like Keats, by want of welcome. There was no frost in his May. Even the wayward drift and over-frankness in treatment of many pieces among his "Poems and Ballads" were condoned far more handsomely than he should

have hoped. If some of us felt a first fine shade of disappointment creep over us with "Chastelard," which deepened with "Bothwell" and "Mary Stuart," it was not that what was done was not well done—for it was all wondrously well done—but it was that a writer so splendidly endowed should not have cared to treat something nobler, to do something still better worth his doing. Had not the world had already a little too much of the frivolity, intrigue, levity, moral squalor, cruelty, and crime of Mary Stuart and her Court? We grieved that one who might have been among the most picturesque of teachers, as the "Songs before Sunrise" testified, should tend towards subsidence into a raker of dead rose-leaves from the bowers of light ladies, a chronicler of their frailties, and of their sufferings at the hands of paramours whose deeds and natures were even more unsavory than their own. Such feelings were not relieved by the appearance of "Tristram and Iseult." It was now too clear that Mr. Swinburne had become by habitual preference a treater of such themes, and that the world must make up its mind to suffer by his choice. One exception we are bound to admit: "Marino Faliero" is a great subject grandly handled. Since those days he has done little more than disport himself with his powers. He has tossed metre about as a Japanese juggler spins plates or keeps sham butterflies upon the wing. He has loved to elaborate an idea through a score of complicated stanzas very much as an over-ingenious musical composer tortures a theme through endless variations. And all these things he does with an exuberance and a faultless dexterity which bewilder and charm us for the moment, but upon which he must pardon us if we reflect with a genuine regret. He has suffered, like most great people, much from epithets. He has been called

cometlike, erratic, meteoric; but these hardly supply a befitting image. He does not strike us as lawless, or out of the way, except in having been very brilliant. He is rather represented, to our thinking, by a star that floats suddenly into the astronomer's ken, shows for a while as of the first magnitude, arousing a wild surmise, a hope, a prophecy, but slowly dies back to a moderate though still considerable splendor, and leaves the disappointed observer saddened as well as silent, like Keats' sailors upon their peak in Darien.

With Mr. Swinburne the roll of the masters is closed. But there are many names, early and late, which deserve record. There is Bishop Heber, whose "Bluebeard" is, with the exception of "The Ingoldsby Legends," the best comic poem ever written by a clergyman. There is Bailey, of whose death at a ripe age we have lately heard, and in whose "Festus" and "The Age" the display of his own literary ambition is perhaps, after all, in spite of their momentary acceptance, the chief effect. Fitzgerald, the translator of Omar Khayyám's "Rubáiyát," must not be forgotten, though his original work may have passed out of remembrance. There is, too, the late T. E. Brown, the Manxman, a great scholar and tutor, whom a long generation of Clifton schoolboys remember with affection and reverence, and whom a grateful group of readers still thank for his "Fo's'sle Yarns," "Manx Witch," and "The Doctor"; genuine pictures, all, of the homely island life and scenery amid which he was born and nurtured. There is Sir Alfred Lyall, whose masculine "Verses written in India," make us wish that there were more of them. There is Professor Courthope, whose "Paradise of Birds" might well have been followed by something *simile aut secundum*. Sir Lewis Morris has been a voluminous writer, and a careful and

conscientious worker. He is, perhaps, the most fruitful and successful of the Tennysonians. His "Epic of Hades," which introduced him, and his "Gwen," a very charming poem, have won him a title to respectful mention among Victorian poets. Prominent among all such in gentle grace of idyllic work is Mr. Robert Bridges. His shorter poems seem to us far his best. In spite of the superiority of his "Return of Ulysses" to another much-praised poem on the same subject, the verdict upon him must be that he falls back beaten from effort upon a large scale. But if anybody who does not yet know him should wish to try the flavor of his smaller fruits, let him take the first taste of them in the delightful, but unnamed, poem which begins—

There is a hill beside the silver
Thames.

We shall be surprised if he does not devour the basketful.

Lord De Tabley's half-dozen volumes are, unfortunately for the many, known only to the few. He had not those qualities which provoke general acceptance. One is tempted to associate him with Arnold, though it is not difficult to differentiate the two. De Tabley could not have written "Thyrsis," perhaps, nor "Empedocles on Etna," though neither subject would have been alien to his genius; but Arnold, on the other hand, would have been incapable of "Orestes," and still more certainly so of "Jaël," that strangest and most original of monologues. Seldom has a sequel to a long-accepted myth been so completely justified. We feel that the lonely woman who in a momentary flush of resistless patriotism dared to slay the sleeping Sisera, whom she had for pity entertained, must have repented of her deed; and seldom has there been a nobler study of passion than De Tabley's of the remorse with which he has dowered her.

His volumes are full of fine things, and we could only wish, not so much for his fame's sake, as for that of the general spread of enjoyment, that the number of those qualified to judge of them were larger than it is.

Three men have been conspicuous during the nineteenth century as writers of "sacred" poetry—Cardinal Newman, Father Faber, and Mr. Keble. There would be an obvious risk in an attempt to judge them by what is after all bound to be a secular standard. They are all eminently sectarian. Let those who prefer either of them to George Herbert do so. For ourselves, we are content with the elder poet. Their piety is their enticement, and Herbert's has an element of universality which theirs lacks. Once we recollect catching in Mr. Keble the true lyric ring. It is in the opening stanzas of the lines written for one of the later Sundays after Trinity, and which begin—

Red o'er the forest peers the setting
sun.

But even these are but a sweet echo, which would hardly have taken shape but for Gray's "Elegy."

A word or two must be said for those whose mission has been to relax the strung bow for us, who have had no lesson to teach beyond the pleasant one that life need not be all labor, and who in teaching this have laughed with us out of working hours. James and Horace Smith were poets. "A Tale of Drury Lane," that epic of the Fire Hose, is as much a poem outside "Marmion" as Pope's "Iliad" is one apart from that of Homer. Aytoun and Theodore Martin created a new Campeador in Don Fernando Gomersalez, and added a startling sequel to the deeds of St. George in the exploit of Mr. Philip Slingsby. Those who have simmered over the neatness and classic smartness of Calverley have owed a like

and not inferior pleasure to Seaman, Graves, and Godley. And as we and our fathers enjoyed in company the extravaganzas of Planché, so have we sat and laughed with our sons over the libretti of Gilbert wedded to the music of Sullivan. In this, as in other matters, we of the nineteenth century have had much to be thankful for.

Two or three stand out among the younger group of living poets whom we have deliberately forborne to estimate. Let us now name them—Mr. Watson, Mr. Phillips, and Mr. Kipling. Their genius is undoubted, and each will take the rank found due to him, as time develops his powers and accumulates his productions. That we do not attempt to appraise them comes not of failure to appreciate or reluctance to acknowledge. But we think that they more properly belong to the twentieth century, and we hope and believe that when the chronicler of the new epoch makes up his treasures their names will each have an honored place upon the roll.

And now, what is the sum of the matter? Is it not that at the dawn of the last century, after a brief period of slightness and estrangement from high purpose, Poetry did rouse herself,

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shake her plumes, remember her mission, and set herself anew to the serious problems of life; to this end, touching the lips, and not in vain, of Crabbe, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Tennyson, and Browning? Have not all these great men caught fire from their epoch, illuminating it in turn with the coruscations of their own uncommunicated genius? And has there not been beside them a long and still brilliant company of lesser lights, grouped in easy gradation of achievement, from the high level of Swinburne, Arnold, and Patmore, down to that of some of those who are at work to-day? Mankind may hereafter shake their heads when they read some of the more unmeasured of contemporary eulogies, but it will always be conceded to the nineteenth century that, while it was an age in which eternal questions and issues had become more complex and more difficult than they had been or seemed to be during its predecessors, it produced poets able and zealous to attack them, and who, while they laid bare their own doubts and self-conflicts, were still fit to register every pulse and stereotype every phase of the moral, social, and intellectual movement that surged around them.

NIGHTS AT PLAY.

There are various streets in London each of which is known to its frequenters as "The Lane." Mincing Lane is an example. What the portly merchant may call it a humble scribe dares not speculate; but his light-hearted clerk would stare at you in amazement if you referred to that place of tea otherwise than as "The Lane." So, too, Petticoat Lane is known to its votaries as "The Lane." There is little fear

of misunderstanding. Petticoat Lane would be as grossly insulted by being confused with Mincing Lane as would Mincing Lane by being confused with Petticoat Lane. "The Lane" in each case keeps itself to itself, and regards a rival claimant to the title with haughty disfavor. In the heart of London is another "The Lane," not to be identified with either of the other lanes—a lane with a long and varied history

behind it; famous as the starting-point of the Great Plague; famous because Mr. Charles Booth has singled out some of its tributary streets for detailed description, house by house and room by room, that posterity may know to what depths London descended in the closing years of the nineteenth century; famous in the pages of Dickens, thrice famous in the annals of the stage. In "The Lane" is a large club where we pass our nights at play.

The club is not bow-windowed. You do not ride past it on the roof of an omnibus and look enviously upon red-leathered arm-chairs or small tables suggestively covered with snowy linen. No stalwart porter in uniform whistles for hansoms to bear its *habitués* homeward. The latest gossip and the latest story do not fleet round its whispering-galleries. Two narrow houses tucked closely side by side shut out the sky as you walk past; a dusty inscription informs you that this is an institute and working-men's club; and the noise from within makes you aware that it is in working order. Over the door flares a lamp like those which hang outside public-houses, and its light shines upon a notice-board setting forth the manifold attractions of the place. Doubtless they are many and compelling; but the inscription is somewhat faded, and it seemed better, when first we saw it, to step inside and inquire than to puzzle out the writing in the chill evening wind outside. At the worst the casual visitor could but be requested to retire—

Clearly we had entered a coffee-bar. A long counter, loaded with steaming urns, thick mugs, plates, glasses, shut off the body of the room from shelves covered with good things. A brisk trade was being carried on—this coffee-bar seemed to do well. On the wall were numbers of notice-boards. "Dramatic Society," "Harriers," "Lecture and Debate," "Football Club," "Feder-

ation Competitions"—such were the headings that caught our eyes and showed that the inscription outside was not calculated to deceive. From an adjoining room came the click of billiard-balls and a babel of talk. In front was a doorway leading—whither? The door had a ground-glass plate, across which mysterious shadows were fitting. Curiosity dragged us to and through that door. It led into a hall where boxing was in progress. A ring was roped off, two lads were pounding each other scientifically and effectually, the instructor watching them critically, other lads sitting round in perfect silence, while the timekeeper kept one eye on his watch and the other on the boxers. "Time!" he called sharply. Instantly the two ran to their corners, fell into chairs, stretched out their legs, and flung their arms restfully over the ropes of the ring. Then the seconds took them in hand. The well-punched faces were dabbed with wet sponges, and cooled and dried by towels used as punkahs. "Time!" was called again, the seconds scrambled out of the ring, the boxers shook hands (this being their last round) and commenced sparring once more. We seized the opportunity to look round. The ring was surrounded by working men and lads, some of whom, to judge by their appearance, had been boxing earlier. The instructor was a tall and slender man with long, wiry arms, and dark eyes that gleamed and blazed as he watched the sport. A dangerous man to offend, we decided. A stoutly built man in his shirt-sleeves was talking in low tones to the timekeeper, addressing him as "Mr. President." The door opened, and a young clergyman came in and whispered something to one of the bystanders, who nodded and went out. Then the clerical eye fell interrogatively upon us. An explanation on our part was clearly desirable, and we thought it best to throw ourselves on the mercy

of the court and to confess that pure curiosity was our introduction. The plea was accepted. "Wait a minute; I just want to see the instructor take on a new member, and then I shall be delighted to show you round the place. Let me introduce you to our secretary."

Accordingly, the round being now ended and the combatants having disappeared to dress, we were introduced to the sturdy man who had been talking to the president. The secretary appeared to be an enthusiast, and launched out into the merits of the various champions of the district, past and present. Then a hush fell on all. The instructor had taken his place in a corner of the ring, close to where we were sitting, and was putting on the gloves. In the opposite corner was a powerful-looking young fellow, who purported to be a complete novice. The secretary looked glum. "I've seen that chap before somewhere," he muttered; "he ain't a novice. Tom," he added, leaning over the ropes, "keep your eyes open. That chap's warm, I reckon." The instructor only winked, and "Time!" was called. For three long minutes the instructor was in a succession of warm corners. The novice followed him all over the ring, lunging heavily, now at his head, now at his body, but in vain. Tom might have been a snake, so rapid and sinuous were his movements. His head and his body were everywhere but in the particular place where his opponent's fist happened to be. It was a splendid exhibition of self-defence, and also of self-control, for not once did he attempt to hit back. Nevertheless, he must have been glad when "Time!" was called. From his corner he beckoned to the secretary, and we overheard the conversation. "Look here, Charlie; I can't go on like this. He'll have me out by accident directly, and that won't do, you know." "Well, you know what

to do, don't you? Put it on him. Give him the one-two, and I'll tell him to keep himself a bit quieter next time he has a lesson." "Time!" We expected that something was going to happen, and watched closely. The novice, as before, made a rush. The instructor leaned lightly to one side, and hit his man under the guard on the body. Instinctively the latter bowed forward, and received a smart blow right on the point of the chin. It was all over. The instructor, after one lightning glance, walked quietly back to his place. The novice stopped as if he had been shot, and then collapsed in a heap upon the floor. "By Jove!" said a voice at our elbow, "that's the neatest knockout I ever saw." Apparently no one was badly hurt, for the novice was already recovering consciousness under the expert care of the secretary.

With our clerical friend we left the hall. As we reached the door the first headings of the secretary's sermon to the repentant novice fell upon our ears. "Come and see the rest of the institute," said the clergyman; and we accompanied him to see a tournament in various indoor games against a neighboring club which was in progress. He took us first into the downstairs billiard-room, which opened out of the coffee-bar. Some forty or fifty men were crowded round the table, leaving barely enough room for the players, who were the objects of all eyes, to take their strokes. Both the players were surprisingly good, and the game was keenly contested. All good strokes and breaks were warmly applauded, and we were glad to notice that the applause was independent of the side represented. "A hundred and seventy-seven plays a hundred and ninety-seven," said the marker, as "Plain" broke down at a difficult cannon. "Spot" chalked his cue carefully, for two hundred up was the game. He made a shot, failed to secure the pock-

et, but scored a surprisingly fluky cannon.

When the jeers from his supporters had subsided the marker's voice sung out, "Two to Spot." Another stroke, and the red dropped quietly into a pocket. "Five to Spot," said the marker; and a rustle went round the room, for the balls were now beautifully situated for a long break. "Ten to Spot," as the red was again pocketed and a pretty cannon scored at the same time. "Plain" put away his cue ostentatiously, as who should say, "I know how to lose like a sportsman." "Twenty-one to Spot," said the marker, and "Spot" prepared to make the winning stroke. Alas! in the excitement of the moment he hit his ball a shade too high; it took a course quite different from that intended, hung trembling for a moment on the edge of a pocket, and then dropped in. "Plain wins," said the marker, and there was a burst of applause from the victorious club. "One for the loser!" cried somebody, and everybody cheered and clapped, while the opponents shook hands cordially. Talk buzzed cheerfully, and the game was played all over again in conversation by the bystanders, till the next pair of players tossed a coin to see which should break the balls.

We watched the game for a time, but, on being reminded that there were other games in progress upstairs, accompanied our host to other quarters of the house to see what was going on there. Over the coffee-bar we found a second billiard-room, where some of the club members were playing a friendly game; and from this we passed into a large room furnished with chairs, in various stages of repair and disrepair, and small square tables. In this room the club competition was in progress.

Chess, ye gods! Do working men play chess? They did here, and played it according to knowledge, it would

seem, for the Muzio Gambit unfolded itself before our astonished eyes. We tore ourselves away, and paused to look on at a game of cribbage. Judging by the scoring-board it was a keenly contested game. One of the players, a delicate-looking lad, was counting. His face quivered with excitement as he glanced from his cards to his score, hastily calculating if he could snatch victory. "Fifteen, two; fifteen, four; pair, six; and run of three—seven," he said. An electric silence ran round the watching group. The player who had not yet pegged his score felt that something was wrong. Had he omitted to count anything? He scrutinized his cards again. "Two, four, six, and three are seven," he said with clouded brow, and marked his points. No one said a word, but we fancied that he would hear more of his arithmetic later on. For ourselves, we passed from table to table, keenly interested in the faces which we saw, and impressed both by the excitement which the match caused and by the courtesy extended by each club to each.

But time was slipping by, and with regret we prepared to depart. The regret was softened by a cordial invitation to come again. "There is a concert here the day after to-morrow; perhaps you would like to come. It might interest you, as it will be given entirely by our own men." We promised to come if possible.

It proved to be possible, though not altogether pleasant, for the rain came down in torrents. We did not anticipate a large assembly of men at that concert. They would probably prefer their own firesides, and had we not been idiots we should have done so too—that was our reflection as a passing hansom cab spattered us with mud from top to toe. But the expectation proved to be wide of the reality. The coffee-bar was crammed with members of the club, attended by their sweet-

hearts and wives. "A nice wet night, so we are sure of a good audience," said our host, and explained, on being questioned, that the average working man does not possess a comfortable library or drawing-room to which to retire when work is done, that his courtship is usually carried on in the street, and that he is not always wanted at home when home consists of two rooms and a small family. It began to dawn on us that wet weather might be a good thing for working-class concerts.

A tide of humanity flowed, we with it, into the small hall at the back of the house. There was a platform and there was a piano. At the piano presided a tired-looking girl of about eighteen, who was playing vigorously all the popular tunes and marches of the day, while the audience crowded noisily into the seats. The hall was small and ill ventilated, and the rain found means of entry through the roof, making a fine puddle on the middle of the stage. Later on unwary singers were surprised into forgetting their songs by the descent of cold drops upon the nape of the neck. All the men were smoking, and the air was thick. Our host took his place in the chair by a small table on the platform, armed with a small hammer. He rapped the table, called for order, and announced, "Our old friend Mr. — will give us the first song of the evening." There was applause as the singer in question made his way to the platform. A glass of something effervescing stood on the chairman's table; the singer wet his whistle and called to the pianist, "Sweet Rosy O'Grady, miss." Then he adjusted his hat on the back of his head and surveyed the audience, while the pianist played over a waltz refrain which we seemed to ourselves to have heard on barrel organs. The singer sung his verse and the chorus (in waltz time) concerning Miss Rosy O'Grady.

When he had informed the audience how dearly he and the said Rosy loved one another, the chairman rapped the table with his hammer: "This time, please!" he cried, and the whole audience took up the lilting chorus. It was evidently a favorite, and we trembled for the roof.

The song ended, the chairman called on somebody else, and the scene was repeated. Again the singer named his song; the pianist, whose memory must be extraordinary, played the refrain; the singer drank from the glass on the table, the chorus lifted the roof, and somebody else was called upon. So the evening proceeded. Occasionally the pianist was not familiar with the song selected. At such times the singer leaned over the piano and hummed into her ear. She listened, always with that tired, uninterested look, struck one or two chords, nodded, and accompanied the song with apparent ease.

Most of the songs were either sentimental or of the full-blooded patriotic variety. Now and then there was a comic man, and the type was unpleasant. His first two verses were usually vulgar but harmless; his third verse was disgustingly suggestive. During these fatal third verses we watched the faces of the audience. Some of the listeners were convulsed with laughter, some tittered shamefacedly; nobody seemed indignant, though there were women and girls present. The pianist looked merely bored. The chairman's countenance was a study. Once he leaned forward at the end of the second verse, and said something to the singer, who looked surprised and brought his song to an abrupt conclusion, declining the *encore* which was vigorously demanded by a section of the audience. The chairman hastily called for the next song. Happily the comic element was small.

After a long hour of concert an interval was announced, and a rush was

made to the coffee-bar. The chairman exchanged a few words with us, again extending an invitation, which we again accepted; then he excused himself, as being responsible for the whole club, much of which had had to look after itself that evening. We screwed up our courage and entered into conversation with the pianist. Oh, yes, she did a good deal of this kind of thing in the winter, mostly at public-houses. No, it was not pleasant for girls, but her mother usually accompanied her, and, besides, it brought in money. She worked all day long at dressmaking, to which she was apprenticed. She had learned to play the piano when father was alive, and now it came in handy. Yes, she got very tired of it sometimes; most people did not seem to think that piano-playing was exhausting work. No, thank you, she would not have any coffee. Good-night, sir.

We stole away before the second part of the concert, the chorus of some well-known song tinkling faintly behind us. That afternoon we had listened to a violinist of European fame; somehow the audience at St. James's Hall did not take their pleasure quite so heartily as the audience of *The Lane* that night!

Our next visit was timed to fall on a debating night. There was to be a discussion upon "The State and the Liquor Traffic," which promised sport. Under a misapprehension of the hour at which the meeting was to commence we arrived fully half an hour too early, and we were wondering how to occupy the unexpected interval when two boys, apparently some fifteen or sixteen years of age, entered the coffee bar. We stared, for we had been under the impression that the club was reserved for men; yet here were two youngsters looking as if the whole place belonged to them. Inquiries addressed to a bystander elicited the in-

formation that there was a boys' club under the same roof, certain rooms at the top of the house being reserved for the "Junior side." Curiosity was piqued, and curiosity had to be satisfied. The bystander was impressed into service, and led us up certain winding and ill-lighted staircases till the evidence of our ears assured us that we were approaching the boys' domain. Our escort opened a door gingerly, and said, "In here, sir"; then he suddenly fled. His flight was not a moment too early. A youth had perceived him, raised a yell, "No seniors allowed up here!" and flung a well-aimed india-rubber-soled shoe at the departing figure. There was a buzz as of wasps in a disturbed nest, and half a dozen mischievous urchins swarmed out to protect the sanctity of their club. For a moment we wished that we were out of bowshot; but the tumult subsided as quickly as it had arisen when the discovery was made that no senior, but only a harmless stranger, was entering the forbidden city. We found ourselves, we hardly knew how, in the possession or under the protection of a lad who appeared to hold a position of authority. "It's like this, sir," he explained; "we aren't allowed in the seniors' rooms, and we take jolly good care that they don't come into ours." Verily, we could believe it!

At first sight the Junior Club seemed to be a reproduction on a small scale of the men's club. There was a billiard-table, very undersized; there was a bagatelle-table, also undersized; there were tables with dominoes, draughts, and other games scattered all over them; there were chairs in various stages of disruption. Adroit questioning elicited the fact that there were differences as well as resemblances. We learned that no smoking or card playing was allowed on the junior side (our eyes and nose assuring us that the rule was kept); while, on the other

hand, the juniors carried on carpentry in a way and with an energy unknown to the seniors. In proof of this we were proudly shown a bookcase, a nest of cupboards, and other handiwork of the junior carpenters, made under the direction of the only senior whose presence was tolerated in the sacred junior precincts.

"What are those small cupboards for?" we asked. "To keep our running things in," we were told. "Where do you run?" "In the streets." Curiosity was again aroused, and again satisfied. We learned that as soon as darkness fell about twenty boys would, on most evenings, crowd into a dressing-room (dressing-cupboard rather—it was only some eight feet long by three feet wide), change into running costume, and go for a two or three mile run through the streets. The police did not interfere with the runners so long as the runners did not interfere with the traffic. The thing seemed incredible, and we were privately resolving to verify our information at more trustworthy sources when the door was flung open and ten or a dozen mud-bespattered figures in the last stages of panting and perspiration flocked into the dressing-room and sat down to rest awhile before dressing.

It began to dawn upon us that there seemed to be no one in charge of the place. There was no disorder, but there was no visible reason why disorder should not spring up, and we pursued our inquiries in this direction. "Who looks after the juniors?" "Oh! we look after ourselves when Mr. — is away. The chairman of the institute is too busy looking after the seniors and making them behave to give much time to us" (this with a smirking Pharisaism), "and Mr. — can't get here every night, so we elect a committee, and the committee look after the rest." "But what happens if there's a row?" "Well, the chairman comes up and

gives us the choice of being turned out for the rest of the evening or of having one of the senior committee to look after us; and we go out. But there is very seldom any real noise, excepting if one of the footballs gets loose, and then it sometimes breaks a window. Then there is trouble."

A hasty glance at our watch told us that it was time to descend to the debate; but we resolved to see more of this boys' club, for, candidly, we did not believe that the boys had yet been invented who could keep quiet for long by themselves—especially if there were footballs within reach.

In the room used for debating purposes five-and-twenty men were assembled, all smoking hard. A stranger presided, and just as we entered called upon the opener to deliver his address on "The State and the Liquor Traffic." The speaker was a working man, and we anticipated the usual teetotal clap-trap, with the old finale of "champagne at night, real . . .," but we were agreeably surprised. "The difficulties caused by the liquor traffic, Mr. Chairman," he began, "have a long history behind them. The first brewer that we know of was Noah, who very soon discovered the evil character of the drink which he had invented." By this we were all attention, and we listened in amazement to a long speech, always fluent, sometimes even eloquent, constantly humorous, ranging through many centuries, wandering all over the world, with apt Shakespearean quotations and police-court statistics. Suddenly the speaker grappled with his main point. He dismissed the Russian Government spirit monopoly and the Scandinavian system with a few words of condemnation, and then he turned to prohibition. The State of Maine was evidently his earthly paradise, and prohibition his ideal law. Arguments and facts that might be thrust against him by subsequent speakers he anticipated

and ridiculed, always ingeniously, if not always ingenuously. A fine peroration on the blessedness of a sober land brought a most remarkable speech to an end. The burst of cheering which greeted its close was a well-earned tribute to a splendid effort. We wondered if the debate would be maintained at this high level, but were hardly surprised to find that it was not. Nevertheless a high standard of intelligence was displayed. The pet fallacies in fact and reasoning which the opener had glided over, like the skater on ice that hardly bears him, were dragged to the light of day and well punished, but no one reached his level of oratory. We were chiefly impressed by the self-control of the speakers (not one of them said a thing about another which had better have been left unsaid—an unusual trait in a debating society), and by the intelligent grasp of the subject which most of the speakers possessed. We found that we had a good deal to think over when the evening was at an end, and we were on our homeward way, and we wondered whether the eminent King's Counsel who was the advertised lecturer for the next week would rival that Covent Garden porter in eloquence.

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One night it chanced that we found ourselves almost alone in the club library with the man who opened the debate to which reference has been made. A friendly remark about the weather led naturally to a mild disquisition on politics and various other objects of interest. We gently diverted the conversation to the subject of the club, for we were anxious to discover a working man's point of view, and how the whole thing struck this particular contemporary. During the chat one or two of the younger members dropped in, and the talk became general. The impressions of their impres-

sions which we gathered from this talk round the fire are a little difficult to put into connected form, partly because their mental attitude differed somewhat from our own, and partly because we had an uneasy feeling that some of them were either guarding their tongues in the presence of a comparative stranger, or else were unaccustomed to self-analysis. However, we present here the general drift of the discussion, and the working man's point of view so far as we could grasp it.

There are, it would appear, two great forces working for evil in the social system. One is the public-house; the other, class division, with resulting antipathy, suspicion, and enmity. The public-house is essentially evil and incapable of reform, because all who are, directly or indirectly, interested in the liquor trade are necessarily interested in increasing the consumption of an injurious article. Moreover, man is a gregarious animal; also, the working man works hard and lives under depressing conditions. Therefore public-houses will continue to be patronized till some better place of meeting and recreation is provided. It would be best to close all public-houses by Act of Parliament, or at the least to grant local option. Failing this, there is a little hope in the new scheme of "the reformed public-house," and more in the multiplication of good working-men's clubs on temperance lines. To the so-called social clubs for working men where intoxicating liquor is sold no mercy should be shown. "They are perfect hells. More men are ruined by them than by even the worst of the pubs. You go round to — Street next Sunday morning at about ten o'clock, and you'll see 'em reeling home." At present it must be sadly confessed there is little hope of Parliament doing anything. "What can you expect," chimed in a young enthusiast, "when

the House of Lords is composed almost entirely of brewers?"

As to the other social evil—class divisions—that would hardly be stamped out in our time. Nevertheless, the signs of the future were hopeful. Such a club as this, where gentlemen and working men met on terms of equality, was capable of working miracles. At this point we set ourselves to find out the basis on which the club in question rested. Hitherto we had been content with a vague idea that it was a sort of parochial club, but we now learned that it expressed the philanthropic efforts of an influential section of one of the learned professions. Most of the leading men of the profession co-operated for this purpose and financed the institute, set the clergyman whom I had seen to organize it, induced younger men with more leisure to come and identify themselves with its working and welfare—in short, expressed the best side of themselves and of their profession in this concrete form. We did not investigate the matter to its depths, partly because there were other problems to be solved, and partly because the men themselves did not seem absolutely clear as to all the details. So we turned the conversation back to the more general aspects of the social question, and here we discovered an interesting difference of opinion. The older men, before whose eyes the movement which, for want of a better term, may be called "Social Christianity" had grown up, who had known either from experience or from their fathers the social conditions of the middle of last century, were deeply impressed by the new order of things. The younger men, who had grown up in the midst of things as they are, were inclined to take everything as a matter of course. They could not remember, for example, a time when there were no clubs and other meeting-grounds of rich and poor, and they regarded the

social movement as being quite in the natural order of things. One or two fervent spirits had their eyes fixed on the future, and their ideas were a strange mixture of sensible desire for real progress and definite reforms with ill-digested rubbish gorged from foolish periodicals and swallowed uncritically. One or two were inclined to regard their wealthier friends as existing chiefly for the purpose of providing prizes for sports. This at once roused an older man's indignation. "It's quite right and fair," he said, "that out of their riches they should give us a decent house for a club. But I don't hold with bleeding them. If we can't do something for ourselves, and if we can't follow sport for its own sake, it's a disgusting shame to us. No, what we want them to give us is a share of their education, and opportunities of widening our minds."

Then the talk shifted to the recent history of "The Lane." "It isn't what it used to be," said someone. "No," interjected a man in the corner, who had been listening silently. "It's changed above a bit. You remember the old round-house? Perhaps you don't, but it stood where the Buildings are now. There used to be a court off the street there, and none of the coppers would dare go down that court alone—no, nor yet in twos. I've seen it when a toff came strolling up 'The Lane'; two of the chaps would begin fighting outside the court, and as likely as not the toff would stop and look on. Then a bit of a crowd would begin to collect round without his noticing it, and they'd edge him nearer and nearer to the court, and all of a sudden they'd hustle him in and drag him into one of the houses—and half an hour after he'd come out half-naked and robbed of every penny-piece! You don't see that now." "No, the County Council's changed all that," strikes in the young enthusiast with the views about

the House of Lords. "The County Council? Bah!" retorts somebody else, and in a moment the fat is in the fire. One side maintains with zeal that the Council is the working man's best friend, a model employer, the best representative of progress in London. Trams, model dwellings, the Works Department, and several quite inaccurate statistics are flung at other speakers' heads. John Burns is prominently to the front. . . . Then the other side gets a word in edgeways. "The County Council? Look what they've done down Clare Market way! Pulled down half the houses, turned the people out

The Cornhill Magazine.

of the other half as insanitary, and then let tenants go into 'em, and sent all the respectable people to go and crowd into Holborn as best they can. When they get up their new buildings, will they let 'em to you or me? Not much. Look what they charge down in Shoreditch! They'll let us go to Tottenham, that's what they'll do. . . ."

There is the making of a very pretty quarrel but somebody remarks, "Hullo! Plymouth Rocks beat the Rovers by eight goals to nil." There is a rush to the football paper, and the regeneration of society is again postponed.

H. G. D. Latham.

A FRIEND OF NELSON.

CHAPTER XXV.

I found assembled in the house at Merton a large family party, such as Lord Nelson's letter had led me to expect, consisting of the Canon, his brother, the Canon's wife and children, and a sister's child. Lady Hamilton's mother was also there. With the exception of the renowned host himself, I had seen none of them before, and it was with no little interest that I beheld for the first time the beauty that had exercised so great an influence on Lord Nelson's life, and had given occasion for so many evil tongues to wag in so many a discussion of affairs that were none of theirs. I had felt sure that it must be beauty of no common kind that could enthral so completely a man of Nelson's character; but for all that I must confess myself amazed at the opulence and almost the exuberance of Lady Hamilton's loveliness. It is not, indeed, quite correct to say that it was beauty of no common type, for

in fact it was of no remarkable refinement. I may best, perhaps, express my estimate of it by the paradox of saying that it was rather a common type of beauty carried to a most uncommon degree of perfection, both of feature and of coloring. Her open adulation of the great hero, her exhibition of his medals, insignia, and every mark of distinction that he had earned in his remarkable career, would have been absurd and ridiculous had he who was thus belauded been anything less than Nelson. As it was, Nelson, never, to say the truth, averse to a little theatrical display, suffered it all in smiling part, as who would say, "This is not the display I should wish on my own account but it is to be pardoned, and I may even take some pleasure and pride in it all, as a mark of the love for me of this woman whom I love." That was the kind of sentiment towards it all that his attitude appeared to me to express; and I am careful to make note of it, since I have more than

once heard animadversions on the display as something unworthy so great a man.

"The apotheosis of a common type" is the phrase employed by a celebrated portrait painter to describe the beauty of Lady Hamilton; but however that may be—and I think it hits the mark well—yet in my own humble judgment it would be quite improper to describe her nature or temperament as a common one. A certain refinement it is to be confessed that it missed, as it was perhaps impossible that it should not miss it under the circumstances of Lady Hamilton's early training, or lack of training; but by way of compensation she had unusual artistic gifts, with a love of bright hues and a rare taste in their arrangement, added to musical ability of a high order—a woman opulently gifted in taste and temperament, in form and feature. Such, as she appeared to me, was the lady who dispensed the hospitality of Lord Nelson's house at Merton. She was pleased to greet me with exceeding kindness as her hero's friend, and this, with Lord Nelson's unfailing thoughtfulness, combined to place me quickly at my ease among the large family circle.

I have no need to repeat the generous warmth of his Lordship's expressions of indignation at the treatment I had received from the naval authorities, nor the far too kind eulogium that he was pleased to pass on my accepting the responsibility of sinking my ship in order that his despatches might the sooner be placed in the hands to which they were to be confided. When I came, in my rapid sketch of the events that befell me on landing, to the theft of the despatches, to their recovery and their ultimate delivery under broken seal, his face became very anxious, and by the agitation of the stump of his lost arm I knew that his mind was much put about.

"That is a grave matter," he said at

once. "The arrival of despatches under broken seal is serious enough in itself, and I only marvel that Lord Barham was so light with you on that point. But that which is far more important is that the fellow had time for their perusal. To what use may he not have put that knowledge?"

I then explained to him that I had the man detained, in the manner I have detailed above, until the arrival of later despatches seemed to make the news of the former out of date and unimportant.

On hearing this his Lordship was not a little relieved, but added that it would have been better to have kept the scoundrel under restraint until he himself, who knew what was in the despatches, or Lord Barham gave orders for his release. Bitterly did I now regret that I had not—if, indeed, it were possible—done so; but of the possibility there was a grave question, by all that the smuggler had told me of the way the clever scoundrel had got round the men who were his guard; and when I mentioned this doubt, there was again a certain sense of relief in his Lordship's manner. But when I came to tell him that this very man, no sooner was his liberty recovered, appeared in the intimate circle of the Prince, then his righteous indignation knew no bounds. *

"But why did you not denounce the scoundrel forthwith, sir, in the first moment that his face appeared in such company?"

It took me then some little pains to explain to him how entirely unsupported, or supported only by what very doubtful testimony my statement must have been; and after a few words of generous wrath at the possibility of accepting a Frenchman's word in preference to that of a British officer, the agitation of his mind calmed down, the clearness of his logical vision came back to him, and he admitted that si-

lence under all the circumstances was the best, and indeed the only course for me.

"But you have been foully wronged, sir, foully wronged, and in my service. But you may set your mind at ease, sir. I will see—indeed, I have already done so—that you are righted. It is not only a pleasure but an act of duty. You may rely on me."

I thanked his Lordship, of course, very cordially, and our conversation passed on to other subjects, with which this narrative has no concern.

It was a pleasant, quiet retreat, this of Merton; a great peace seemed over it all. Lying so low by the river Wandle, it must be plaguy rheumatic in winter, was a thought that came to me, though I did not express it; but at this season there was no rheumatism in the air, and everything was very peaceful under the afternoon sky. We walked beside the little rivulet that Lady Hamilton had been pleased to lead through the garden from the river and dub with the name of Nile, in memory of one of Nelson's great battles. Just now some white-plumed ducks were sailing in the brooklet, and little Horatia came down, calling to them, and threw them some crumbs from her tea. Lord Nelson summoned the child to him, and sent her off again with a pat on the head and a few kind words, after which he grew very silent and thoughtful a while. I too was silent, not liking to intrude upon his mood of brooding, out of which he presently roused himself to ask me the curious question:

"Has it struck you ever as singular that, out of all men in the Bible history, David—David, the man of many faults, of grievous sins—was the man after God's own heart?"

"One most grievous sin he certainly committed," I replied, with my mind on Uriah set in the forefront of the battle.

"One most grievous sin," Lord Nelson repeated thoughtfully. "And afterwards God forgave him. He came to God with the trustfulness that a child should have in coming to a loving father. And God forgave. In spite of his grievous sin he was the man after God's heart."

"That is so, my Lord," I said; "so we are told."

"Ay—so we are told. And do you think God now will be as ready to forgive one grievous sin, that has been repented of with deepest remorse by many years of subsequent life, honorable, without sin—save, I should say, those daily sins of the heart and mind against which we strive in vain?"

"Doubtless," I said; "my Lord, God's mercy does not change."

He seemed on the point of adding more; but after a slight pause he bethought him better of his intention. He shivered a little.

"The evening air grows chill," he said. "Shall we go in?"

"As your Lordship pleases," I said, and we walked in silence to the house, my mind busied with the application—had they any personal application—of his words. To this day I cannot be certain they had; and yet some meaning other than a mere abstract discussion of the Bible problem his Lordship must have intended by them. I have no comment to add to them, save that I will append this extract—let those judge of it as they please who read—from a codicil to the will of Sir William Hamilton: "The copy of Madame Le Brun's picture of Emma, in enamel, by Bone, I give to my dearest friend, Lord Nelson, Duke of Brontë—a very small token of the great regard I have for his Lordship, the most virtuous, loyal, and truly brave character I ever met with. God bless him, and shame fall on all those who do not say Amen!"

At table Lady Hamilton was the principal talker, Lord Nelson content-

ing himself with a kindly word or two now and again when appealed to, and being ever on the watch to see that all had what they wanted. He was always averse to the habit of sitting long over wine when dinner was finished, and soon led the way into the drawing-room, where Lady Hamilton sang to us very finely, as I, who am no judge in such matters, should imagine, accompanying herself on the spinet. In an interval of the music I ventured to remind his Lordship of a promise made long ago in the Mediterranean, that he would come down to see the fine oaks in and about the neighborhood of Buckhurst Park. It was a matter that he had very much at heart, and had addressed a memorandum some years before, on the subject of the cultivation and care of the oaks in the Forest of Dean, to the Prime Minister, conceiving that if more attention were not given to this important particular our Navy would soon be hard put to it for the material of their ships. To my great joy he instantly engaged himself to redeem this promise, which I had already mentioned to my Aunt Dorset; whereupon she had at once said how glad she would be to entertain so distinguished a guest beneath her roof if he would avail himself of her hospitality.

"The remaining days of this month," his Lordship said, "I have promised myself that I will spend here at home after so long an absence, but on September 1 I will, if her Grace have the kindness to receive me, be her guest for a night or two." And so the matter was settled then and there. Subsequently we discovered the first of the month to be a Sunday, on which day his Lordship was averse to employing the services of man or beast, except in a case of necessity, and it was arranged that he should come on the second, being a Monday. All the while we talked over these projects I cannot re-

call that a servant was in the room, a circumstance that I certainly did not note particularly at the time, though later it came to be matter of some moment and discussion.

In the morning his Lordship carried me with him in his phaeton to London, and later in the same day I took the midday coach and went down to my home on the Forest, excited, perhaps out of due measure, by the prospect of his impending visit.

CHAPTER XXVI.

At that date there was not a home in England that would not have fluttered from housetop to basement with the prospect of receiving the great Nelson as its guest, and my Aunt Dorset was by no means one to be insensible of the honor that the near future had in store for her. I had myself been witness of the enthusiasm that greeted every appearance of the Admiral in London, and our drive from Merton, as we approached the more populous region of the town, had been greeted by something like a long-continued ovation. And while my Aunt Dorset was planning with minutest care every detail that she deemed might add to the content of this greatest and yet most simple of men, who could be so well content with a hammock and a ship's cuddy, I, as his cicerone through the woods, had planned the itinerary that should include the finest specimens of the oak and the most promising plantations for his inspection. From all this pleasant work and forecast I was suddenly summoned by a most urgent missive from Madame d'Estourville at Brighton, conveyed, as fast as his horse's speed could carry it, by a trusty servant of the Lady Anne Murray. The man was brought to me but just arrived as I was returning from one of my tours of inspection through the woods, and handed me a sealed letter,

which he had been strictly enjoined to entrust to no one's keeping but my own. The letter, whose very brevity marked its urgency, ran:

"Come at once. I have urgent need of your help. Meet me at Star Inn, Lewes. Inquire there for Mrs. Elliot.
"H. d'E."

That was the whole—no message of affection, such as two former letters received from her had not failed to contain, no hint as to the nature of the help in need of which she stood. Yet I doubted not that it had to do with the rascal De Marigny—that the moment had arrived in which I was to lay my hand on him in a just vengeance.

"Madame d'Estourville was well when you left Brighton?" I asked the servant.

"Her ladyship was well to all appearances," was the man's answer—so far satisfactory. I bade him repair to the servants' hall to make amends for the speed at which evidently he had ridden, and prepared with all despatch to be on the road myself.

"At the Star Inn, Lewes?" I thought, as I made my brief arrangements—"to save time, no doubt, by meeting me halfway. She has a head for everything." After a few vague words of explanation and farewell to my mother, who, I fear, shed a tear or two at this abrupt and unexpected departure, I was quickly on horseback, mounting the Forest Ridge, whence I should soon descend on the sleepy old town of Lewes. The sun was setting with a glorious glow, flooding the magnificent landscape with a golden light, inexpressibly beautiful; so that, full as my mind was of fears and expectation, the beauty of the land could not but arrest my gratified attention as I rode. I took a road that led me into Maresfield, with Wych Cross lying on my right,

and, reaching this village about sundown, it was full dark by the time I made out the lights of Lewes. Riding slowly through the street, to avoid attracting undue notice, I pulled rein at the door of the Star hostelry. In a trice I had given my smoking horse to an ostler's charge, and, ordering a private room, handed a note to a servant with a request that it should be taken to Mrs. Elliot, whom I understood to occupy a room in the hotel.

The situation was one of some delicacy. Even under the pseudonym that she had taken there was risk to the reputation of a young and beautiful woman in meeting a man at a country posting-house. It could, I knew, be only a case of pressing necessity that would induce Hortensæ to take this course. I was glad to see that she was attended by her tiring-woman—a person of discreet age—when I opened my door in answer to a knock and found her awaiting me without. I pressed her dear hand fervently, but this was not the time nor the opportunity for a warmer greeting.

"Dearest," she whispered, enchantingly; then added in a louder voice: "We can have our little talk in the public room. I have sent to see that no one is there. It is larger." So saying she passed on down the very finely carved old oak staircase. For the moment I did not seize the significance of the size of the room; but so soon as we had entered it became apparent to me, for she ordered her tiring-woman to take a seat beside the door, while she led the way to the farther end before seating herself, and motioning me to do the same. By this wise disposition she avoided all occasion for evil tongues to wag, owing to the saving grace of the waiting-woman's presence, while at the same time we were as much alone for the purposes of conversation in moderate tones as though the woman had remained at Brighton.

"Well," I said, as we sat down and Hortense paused a moment to put her thoughts in order.

"Well," she echoed, under the spur of my ejaculation, "I have found the purpose for which my dear cousin, Henri de Marigny, is in England."

"So I supposed," I said, "when you sent for me."

"He is the head, the chief actor, in a plot to assassinate Lord Nelson."

"What!" I almost yelled in my excitement and indignation. "Him! the greatest man in all England!"

She laid her restraining hand on my arm. "Quietly, my friend, if you please. Remember, we are not quite alone, and hotel walls may have ears."

"You are right—of course you are right," I said; "but still the thing is so monstrous, so incredible—such a man as Lord Nelson!"

"Exactly so, my friend; and if he were not such a man as Lord Nelson he would not be worth the trouble and risk of assassinating."

"I see that," I said; "yes, I see that. But, still, who would dare— Is it his own idea, do you think?"

"I think—indeed, I am sure—I know from whom the idea originated. It is the excellent, the pleasant, the honorable idea of the man who calls himself Emperor of the French."

"Of him?" I cried. "Of Buonaparte? Oh, no, no. Surely it cannot be possible!"

"It may not seem possible, my friend," said she, with conviction. "Nevertheless it is true, quite true. I have every reason to believe it true."

I may as well say now as by-and-by, that the information in this particular came, as I learned, from a very tainted source. At the moment I was very little inclined to believe it. Nevertheless, later events disposed me rather to her belief again; the chief perhaps being the tolerably convincing proof that

Napoleon was cognizant, several years later, of the attempt that was to be made to assassinate the Duke of Wellington in Paris, and the legacy that he bequeathed by will to the would-be assassin. If he could thus approve of the murder of the great soldier *in time of peace*, how much more likely that he might sanction the assassination of the great seaman *when a state of war was declared*! Evidently the disposition of Napoleon gives no guarantee whatever that the latter—far the lighter—guilt may not be laid to his charge.

"But how do you know all this?" I persisted in answer.

"I know it," she said, "by his correspondence—by what I have read; and also by what I have overheard. You will hate me, I daresay (often I have cordially despised myself) for my confession, but I have read his letters as I have had the chance (I have had to meet guile with guile; and you will remember that this is my husband's murderer). And I have been aided by his own servant—that has been my best and most lucky chance. Henri had made this man his enemy. Ah, my friend, you do not know what this Henri can be—he, with his nice manners, his smiling face. You have not seen. He can be rough, he can be cruel. Yes, he can be cruel, rather than rough. It is not that he speaks roughly to a servant, but with a sneer, with a smiling jibe—ah, far more hurting than any temper. It is so the devil would find fault with his lesser spirits who disobeyed."

How this woman could hate! The thought caused a shudder in me; and then I thought that if she could so hate, so too could she love; and at that thought I glowed again.

"Tell me the details," I said hungrily—"the when and the where of this assassination?"

"Ah," she answered, "the details! That is just what I do not know—the

when and where; it is that for which I need your help."

"How much, then, do you know?"

"This only—that the attempt is to be made on Lord Nelson's life on the occasion of a visit that he is shortly to make somewhere in this county. So much I know, but so much only. More exactly I cannot tell you."

"But I can," I said, eagerly. "Ah, I can tell you. This visit is to my own home—to my Aunt Dorset, at Buckhurst."

"Good—good!" she cried. "I fancied you might know, seeing that you wrote me you were about to see his Lordship. That is the where; now for the when?"

"The when I can tell you too. It is fixed for Monday next, the second."

"The second; and this is the twenty-eighth. Then there will be the twenty-ninth, thirtieth—how many days in August?—ah, yes, thirty-first; then one, two—let me see," checking them off on her delicate fingers and relapsing into her mother-tongue in her excitement, "*un, deux, trois, quatre*—four days clear. Ah, that should do."

"That should do," I echoed, "if only we knew for what."

"For what?" she repeated with impatience. "For but one thing that there is to do—to warn Lord Nelson of his peril, to inform him that this promised visit must not take place."

But I had to shake my head more than doubtfully.

"Madame," I said, "with all respect for your wit, which I know to be brighter a thousand times than mine, I do not think that this can be. It is not, in my judgment, to be done. You see you have every advantage in the world over me save one: I know Lord Nelson—you do not. With the knowledge that I have of his Lordship's character I have every certainty that to warn him of the peril he is about to encounter would be the last way in life to make him change his dispositions.

It would, on the contrary, but confirm him in them."

"Ah, well!"—she shrugged her shoulders as if she gave the matter up as too hard for her comprehension. "And that is what it is to be an Englishman!"

"Say rather that is what it is to be a Nelson."

"Well, have it as you will. What proposal do you make, then? Have you another in place of this of mine that you reject?"

I rose and paced the room a step or two before I answered. Then I came back and said, "Yes, I have."

"Well?"

"Well, the point of the business is this—in the first place, to save Lord Nelson. That is, of course, the first matter. But there is a second. There is but one way to set him free of that dastard crew of assassins—to take them, to take them red-handed, in the act. What other security that at some more convenient time they will not repeat their attempt, if foiled in it this once?"

"True, true," she said, "most true. But will there not be great risk? You could not imperil Lord Nelson's life, even for such an end as this. His life must be the first thought."

"And it shall be, madame; I assure you, I vow to you, by that which is most precious and sacred to me in this world. See, madame"—I glanced down the long, dim-lit room, and saw the tiring-woman nodding herself to sleep—"I set my life upon it," and therewith raised her hand and kissed it fervently, she graciously making no protest.

"Ah, well," said she, "my part is done. God knows it has been a part none too creditable—its cajoleries are loathsome to me. But it is done. To you, my friend, my partner in this business, I must assign the next act. Would it may be the final one."

"Your partner in this and in some

greater—in our life-long business, if you please,” said I.

“But the final act has not yet been played. See to it, sir; it is your part to play it. Bravely I do not doubt that you will play it, but you must also play it skilfully, prudently, shielding Lord Nelson from all risk, and——” Then she gave a little sigh that ended almost in a sob, and finished in a whisper, “Yourself, too, from all peril, *darling*.”

My delight, my ecstasy, at her thought for me, at her fond word, fired me at once with the desire to take her in my arms then and there, regardless of all considerations; but as she spoke she defeated, as if she had foreseen them, all such attempts at foolishness

or caresses by rising to her feet and calling aloud to her dozing waiting-woman. Presently she wished me a formal yet gracious “good-night,” and left the room with her attendant.

“Who could have given the information?” That was the question that I vainly asked myself. As I have noted, no servant was, to the best of my belief, in the room at Merton when we discussed this visit. Yet there was no secret made of it. Lord Nelson might have mentioned his designs in London. In a thousand ways it might have come to the knowledge of a spy. Far more important to determine the part to take, now the dastardly scheme was revealed.

Longman's Magazine.

Horace G. Hutchinson.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTMAS, PRITHEE.

Christmas, prithee, be thou drest
 In thy best—
 Snowy wimple, snowy gown—
 Laying down
 Flooring pure and white, to greet
 Jesu's feet.
 Gloria in Excelsis.

Bid thy frosty handmaids bear
 Through the air
 Cloth of silver for thy veil
 Clear and frail,
 While the robins welcome sing
 To thy king.
 Gloria in Excelsis.

Angels o'er thy radiant brow
 Leaning low,
 Joyous, carol once again
 Sweet refrain,
 Seeing our dark earth so fair:
 “Peace be there,
 Gloria in Excelsis.”

Lady Lindsay.

THE ATTIC HOMESTEAD.

Xenophon's work on agriculture lacks the divine afflatus of the *Georgics* and the patient, comprehensive research of Varro's *De Re Rustica*; its more modest scope is shown by the name he gave it: "Oeconomics," or as Etienne de La Boëtie rendered it, "La Mesnagerie"—a capital word that has gone down in life! Xenophon traced the rule of the farm on rather general lines; he started from the principle that, in the main, agriculture is made up of common sense and diligence. To critics who blame him as unscientific, I would submit that in Southern farming, at least, these two qualities will carry the cultivator farther than the most beautiful steam-plough. The standpoint from which he viewed the agriculturist was not without elevation, though it did not strike him, as it struck Virgil, that the husbandman was a sort of high priest. But neither did he regard him as the mere servant of private and selfish ends. The landed proprietor was the pillar of Society and agriculture the life-blood of the State; the fields grew more than corn—they grew men. This was his point of view. Cultivating the land becomes a source of pleasure to its possessor, of prosperity to his house, of health to his body which it fits for all the duties of the free man. The Earth gives both the necessities and the charms of life. The lovely and fragrant garlands with which we deck the altars are bestowed by her. She yields a thousand varieties of nourishment; she feeds the war-horse, she toughens the sinews of the soldier. The soil inspires its tillers with the will to die in its defence. How hospitable is the country to its guests! How joyous the blazing fire on the hearth in winter, the cool, shady groves in summer! What more inspiring than a rural religious fête? What life is pleasanter for

the workers, more delightful for the wife, more salubrious for the children, more generous for friends? The land, which brings forth its increase in proportion to our zeal in cultivating it, teaches the primal law of justice. We learn from husbandry to do to others as we would that they should do unto us. The wise husbandman encourages his laborers not less than a general his soldiers, "for hope is as necessary to slaves as it is to free men." (In the army Xenophon was called "the soldier's friend"; he knew what could be done with men by moral influence.)

No writer was ever more sincere; he adorns nothing and speaks from his own experience, which is that of a man of the world who has made no excursions into the clouds. He does not put his own hand to the plough like Tolstoi, but he is a firm believer in the axiom that it is the master's eye which soonest fattens the horse. It is absurd to own an estate and know nothing about its management. Nevertheless, he does not counsel perpetual attention to business; he would have agreed that "no play" makes very dull boys. He looked upon the pleasures of a country life as not less actually profitable than its duties. What was the chase? A nursery for strategists. What was riding across country? A school for cavalry. Four hundred years later the Latin writer on agriculture, Columella, criticised sport as folly and waste of time; Xenophon could not have imagined life in the country without it, but he ennobled the pastime by the skill he brought to it. He aimed at excellence in all he attempted. He was the finest rider of his day, and his little treatise on horsemanship has won the praise of every writer on the subject from then till now. The Attic phrase of "handsome and good" suited

him both in its metaphorical and its literal sense, for he was distinctly an "*homme du bien*," and his good looks were famous. Besides his love of open-air athletics, he had other Anglo-Saxon characteristics such as the colonizing instinct joined to affection for home and the taste for adventure without the tastes of the adventurer. But he possessed the defects of his qualities: he had no idealism or "inwardness," the problems of mind did not interest him; he left the Incomprehensible to take care of itself. What interested him in Socrates was the man and it is the man that he makes known to us. But for Xenophon we might have missed in Socrates that moral perfection which Goethe rated the highest of all—the reverence for those below us. Xenophon's Socrates not only talks affably to all sorts of people; he can actually draw instruction out of them. A country curate complained to Dr. Johnson that his surroundings were unintellectual; his neighbors could only talk of "Veals"—the local name for calves. "Sir," replied the doctor, "learn to talk of 'Veals!'" Socrates would have thanked him for that word. How gracious he is in the scene of the performing children! How courteously he addresses the showman, how readily he appreciates the cleverness of the little dancing girl! So far from despising the exhibition of a poor little troop of wandering jugglers, he says seriously ("after reflection"), that the child's skill in throwing up and catching her hoops and dancing in time to the music has confirmed a conclusion to which he has been coming for a long time—namely that women are nowise inferior to men save in physical strength and perhaps, a little, in mental balance. They can learn all things, if properly taught, as quickly and as well as men. When, afterwards, the child performs a blood-curdling feat of jumping head downwards into a circle of swords, he gently

remarks that this is, no doubt, very dangerous, but what possible good is there in it? Is there beauty in contortion? Would it not be less hurtful to the pretty children and more pleasing to the spectators if they danced to the flute dressed as nymphs or graces? The Sicilian showman, humanized for the moment, as were all who came within Socrates' influence, acts on the hint and improvises the little pantomime with which the banquet ends.

When the question of training women comes up in the "*Economics*" Socrates makes no plea for educating their higher faculties, and this has been supposed to prove that he was indifferent on the matter. But he was not in the habit of proposing alterations in the existing conditions of life; he took men just as they were, believing that their souls, or moral part, could be improved through their minds or intellectual part, rather than by any change in outward circumstance. Still, it cannot be doubted that since he admired Aspasia's mental attainments, he would have been glad if her sisters, who thought themselves so much better than she, had not been so far behind her in humane culture. He granted that women could learn, and Plato's thoroughly revolutionary views on women's education are only the logical development of this principle. Plato wished girls and boys to be taught everything alike, even to fencing and riding. He admitted that the very best men were superior to the very best women, but since many women are more gifted than many men why should not they have an equal chance? No one would dispute this now, but it must have sounded midsummer madness at Athens whose women had no place in society at all. Theoretically they might go to the theatre when tragedies were performed, but it seems unlikely that the ladies of the upper

classes often went there. They had no opportunity of joining in conversation with the other sex except in the case of their nearest relations: this continued to be the case down to a late period.

Cornelius Nepos remarks that what is thought respectable in one place appears quite the reverse in another; so while every Roman brought his wife to the feast, such an act would have excited horror in Greece. There seems to have been no equivalent to the tea-gardens (without tea) of Turkish cities, where you may see the veiled ladies laughing and chattering among themselves as though they had never a care. A mild form of amusement, but better than none.

The Greek little girl was happy. She was the pet still more of her father than of her mother. She had dolls with jointed limbs which possessed their proper names, their outfits, their baby-houses and furniture. She played at numberless games, but the favorites were ball and knuckle-bones. A lovely Tanagra figure shows the Greek girl playing at this last universal game, which is also represented as the sport of Niobe's daughters in a well-known fresco found at Pompeii. I am still looking for a part of the world where it is not played; I, myself, once played a match with a gypsy child at Granada and lost it. When the Greek girl reached the mature age of seven she was expected to offer her toys to Artemis, a sacrifice recalled in some pretty lines in the *Anthology*. But I think that the goddess gave back, at least, the ball: a game of ball was recommended by Greek physicians as the best exercise after the bath. Artemis, herself, lives forever as the eternal girl: following the stag on the mountains and the wild beast along the wind-swept summits, but coming back to lead the dance, beautifully dressed, and not disdainful of feminine tasks;

for is she not known as Artemis of the golden distaff?

Sophocles described the young girl rejoicing in the flowery meads of her youth, till the maiden became wife and mother and learned to know the painful watches of the night, spent in anxiety for husband and children. It would have been well for her if such anxiety, the common lot of all, had been the sole cause of trouble to the Athenian wife. It seems that ill-assorted unions were rather frequent at Athens, and if her home was unhappy, what had she to fall back on? A man, as Medea says, whose home is unpleasing to him, can go abroad and enjoy the company of his friends, "but we must look for happiness to one alone."

It often happened that marriages were made up by third persons who described inaccurately the affianced couple to one another; a fraud for condemning which Socrates praises Aspasia. Mischief was the result. The bridegroom was not extremely young; thirty was thought to be a suitable age for man to marry at; but the bride was sometimes a mere child, as we see from the charming little romance of "The Wife of Ischomachus" for the better understanding of which I have strayed into these few remarks on Athenian womanhood. It forms by far the most original feature in the "Œconomics," and though it must be taken with several grains of salt, it is still the best description we have of a Greek interior.

Socrates observed that while the wife's power in the household was only second to the husband's, she was the last person to whom he spoke openly about his affairs, of which she commonly knew less than his most casual acquaintances. This may be said to be the text of the story which follows. Of Ischomachus nothing is known except a shadowy mention in Plutarch; but from what we do know of Xenophon,

it is impossible to doubt that in this instance, he is, if not telling his own story, at least ventilating his own ideas. Socrates is supposed to meet Ischomachus in the portico of the Temple of Zeus the Liberator. He asks him how it is that he has a healthy color and time to spare, though all Athens declares that his estate is the best managed in Attica? To this Ischomachus replies, that he can go where he likes, because his wife is perfectly qualified to manage everything at home. Socrates enquires if this inestimable helpmeet learnt her duties from her father and mother? Ischomachus answers that this was impossible; when he married her she was scarcely fifteen—what could she have learnt but how to spin and card the wool and give it out to the maids? She had been brought up to have simple tastes; that was a good foundation, but all the rest she had learnt from him. Then Socrates begs him to tell him all about it—he would sooner listen than see the finest horse-race. And so would we.

In Greek marriages, love was post-nuptial; the wooing began with the wedding instead of ending with it. The little bride was very timid, very shy: the first thing to be done was to gain her confidence. Ischomachus prudently did not begin his lectures till the honeymoon was waning. He simply prayed the gods to grant him the wisdom to teach, and his bride the heart to learn all those things that were needed to make their union holy and happy. She joined willingly in the prayer, which he thought a good sign for the future. Then he waited till they had got to know each other and to speak familiarly on different subjects. Even when the schooling begins in earnest, behind the teacher there is still the lover. Nothing flatters a very young girl so much as to speak to her seriously of serious things; for the rest,

the wife of Ischomachus would have shown but little wit had she failed to seize what there was of elevated, pure and true in the picture presented to her of a woman's rôle. The prosaic details and the narrowness of the canvas should not blind us to the fact that the Greek conception of marriage as here set forth, *lies at the very root of all Western civilization.*

After the interval allowed for "becoming acquainted" Ischomachus asks his wife whether she begins to understand why he married her? She most certainly knew that there would have been no trouble in finding another wife for him, another husband for her. Why did he choose her? why did her parents choose him? Was it not because it appeared to both sides that they were truly fitted for each other, and also fitted to serve the higher objects of matrimony as heads of a household and founders of a new family. If the Divine Powers gave them children they would join together to bring them up aright, and the reward would not fall them of having good children to bless their old age. But even now, without waiting for that sacred bond, *all they possessed was in common.* All that was the wife's she had already given and now he does the same, he gives her all that is his. It is no more a question of which of the two furnished the most, but it is well to realize that the one who manages best the common store is the one who brings the most valuable contribution to it. "But how can I help? What can I do?" asks the young wife; "you manage everything; my mother only told me that I was to do what was right." Ischomachus says that he received the same advice from his father; but that husband and wife did not do right if they neglected to watch over the property and to improve it. "But how," the wife asks again, "can I help?" Ischomachus says that this is the task marked out for

her alike by the gods and by the laws. Each has an allotted share; to the man fall heat and cold, long journeys and wars; to the woman household duties. The first of all these is the care of children—to which end the gods have implanted in woman's heart an infinite need of loving little creatures. Next comes the care of the household; to point which moral Ischomachus extols the Queen Bee, though a somewhat closer knowledge of natural history would have made him select that far more intelligent housekeeper the mother-wasp. He develops the idea that marriage is a divine institution in view of the children, a social institution in view of the property. Your duty to God is to bring up your children well; your duty to the State is to foster and not waste your substance. Of course the conception of thrift as a national virtue is absolutely correct, but its practical application is foreign to English ways of thought. Frugal living and a strict look-out over expenditure suggest a tinge of meanness to the English soul. Ischomachus saw nothing mean in saving, since it enabled him to give nobly to religion, to help his friends in their need, and to contribute munificently to the embellishment of the city. It would be useless to rehearse all the items of domestic economy which Ischomachus impresses on his docile pupil. She is charged with the care not only of the provisions for the table, but also of the farm produce which is brought to be stored at home or to be employed for spinning and weaving. The counsels of prudence are summed up in the admonition: "to see that we do not spend in a month what ought to last for a year." One piece of advice touches a higher note; "There is another thing"—says Ischomachus—"which, perhaps, you will not think very pleasant; it is, that when one of your slaves is ill, you ought to look after him yourself and do all you

can for his recovery." "Ah!" she cries, "there is nothing that I shall like to do more than this; they will love me for it!" An answer with which Ischomachus was justly delighted and which evoked from him the most beautiful little speech that any husband ever made to any wife: "But the sweetest reward will be when, having become more perfect than I, you have made me your servant; when as youth and beauty pass, you will not fear to lose your influence, because in growing old you will become a still better companion to me, a better helper to your children, a more honored mistress of your home."

Ischomachus tells his wife that she should take the trouble to instruct stupid or backward slaves in their tasks; they may then become in time capable and devoted servants, priceless treasures in the house. He goes more fully into the management of slaves when he deals with the farm bailiff. He says that like other animals, men are influenced by rewards and punishments. Noble souls are excited to do their utmost by the desire of praise, ignoble ones by convincing them that virtue pays. The first thing to secure is the good-will of your dependents; without this, very little can be done with them. But they soon become attached to the master and his house if he treats them kindly, and if, whenever a stroke of good fortune befalls himself, he gives some advantage to them. This is, I think, the earliest hint of "sharing profits!" For the rest, Xenophon declares (for certainly it is he who speaks), that he has known good masters with bad servants, but never a bad master with good ones. It is disappointing to remark that, elsewhere, he writes unsympathetically of the "licence" accorded to Athenian slaves, who were never allowed to be struck and who wore no distinctive class dress, so that "anyone might take

them for free citizens." Xenophon preferred the harsh practices in force at Sparta, which is only another proof that it is impossible to guess a man's public policy from his private disposition.

The dominant passion of Xenophon (if we take Ischomachus as his interpreter) was order. He grows lyrical in praise of the beautiful neatness of a man-of-war, and the passage might have been written to-day! This is the model which Ischomachus holds up to his wife for imitation. How admirable is a tidy linen-press or china-closet! Nay, how lovely are symmetrically arranged saucepans! Here the author has a suspicion that somebody will laugh, and perhaps he was laughing himself. A young wife wedded to such a martinet must have undergone various bad quarters of an hour; yet when she is really disturbed at the loss of something that was not in its right place, her mentor made haste to discover that he was himself to blame for it.

The most serious reproof that the wife of Ischomachus ever received was on quite a different score. One morning she appeared with her girlish brow whitened with *Lait d'Iris*, rouge upon her cheeks and a pair of high-heeled shoes on her feet. She was only following the fashion of the day; Athenian ladies, in spite of the seclusion in which they lived, had a perfect mania for cosmetics and gauds: they painted their necks and faces, darkened their eyebrows and wore a profusion of jewels. Self-adornment was even encouraged by the law which punished any woman who was observed to be carelessly dressed. It has been thought that artificial embellishments became the vogue because real beauty, so common among the men of Athens, was rare among the women. Curiously enough, in modern Athens there are far more handsome men than women,

although the most beautiful girls I ever saw were two sisters moving in Athenian Society; but their family sprang from the isle of Paros.

When Ischomachus saw his wife disguised as above described, instead of telling her that she never looked so well (which was what she expected in her poor little heart), he began to ask the most irritating Socratic questions. How would she like it if he brought her a quantity of pinchbeck silver and imitation jewelry? "Oh! do not say such dreadful things," she exclaims. "Could I love you as I do if you were to act like that?" When she sees the gist of his argument, which he pushes home with relentless logic, she takes the lesson in good part and only asks what she is to do to really become better-looking instead of only seeming so? As an alternative to cosmetics, Ischomachus proposes plenty of exercise, but alas! it is to be all indoors. Running about the house and offices to see that all is right and lending a hand at kneading the bread, hanging out the clothes and making the beds. This is the way to get a good complexion and a good appetite; and the maid-servants are encouraged when they see that their mistress is not above joining in their work. So ubiquitous a mistress would not be exactly popular below stairs in a modern house. Women, says Xenophon, are worth very little who are too fine to do anything but sit all day with crossed hands; which is true; still, it might have occurred even to him, that the routine proposed for the wife was cramped and dull compared with the vigorous outdoor life which he assigns to the husband. Ischomachus gets up early, and if he has no business to transact in the town, his groom brings round his horse and leads it before him to his farm (which, we may suppose, was about three miles out of Athens). He walks the distance on foot for the sake of a "constitution-

al." When he gets to the place, he watches the sowing or reaping or whatever rural task is going on and afterwards he mounts his horse and rides away over hedges and ditches and hills and dales—the sort of country one would cover in war-time—never stopping at obstacles, but taking care not to lame the horse if he can help it. On his return, the groom rubs down the horse and then takes it back to the town, carrying with him a basket of whatever farm produce is needed for the kitchen. Ischomachus walks home at a brisk pace and dines, neither too generously nor too meagrely, so that he feels well and active for the rest of the day.

An Italian proverb bids us praise the sea and keep to the land; many poets have praised the country and lived in towns. But Xenophon was not a poet, and he meant what he said when he gave the palm to a country life. He was glad to say good-bye to towns for good and all. Athens could never have been the same to him after the death of Socrates, which was the first news that met him on his return from conducting the retreat of the Ten Thousand. Nor did he like the whole trend of Athenian policy. It is sad to feel that you have grown foreign in your own land. Later he was banished from Athens, but even when the decree of banishment was revoked and he might have gone back, he did not do so. His one desire was to live out his days on the beautiful estate which Sparta had presented to him, where he took up his abode with his wife and two little boys when he was still in the prime of life. It seems that he was once compelled by the tide of war to leave this estate, but there is reason to hope that he regained possession of it and was able to remain there till he died at the age of ninety. It was in this delightful retreat that he wrote nearly all his works: giving thus a practical illustration of one

merit of country life not noted in his treatise: the leisure it affords for literary pursuits.

Scillas, the spot where Xenophon's property was situated, not only lay in one of the prettiest parts of Greece, but had the great advantage of being within a few miles of Olympia where every five years all the most distinguished Hellenes assembled for the celebration of the Olympian games. On one occasion, amongst the visitors was Xenophon's old friend the Warden of the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, to whom, years before, he had entrusted a certain sum of prize-money on the eve of a campaign; if he died the money was to be offered to the goddess; if he lived it was to be restored to himself. This money the Warden brought with him and with it Xenophon purchased some land, near his own estate, rich in streams, fish and game, which he consecrated to Artemis. He raised an altar and had a statue made just like that at Ephesus, only smaller, and of cypress wood instead of gold. Here, once a year, all the rich and poor men and women of the country round were invited to attend a festival, their wants being supplied "by the goddess": barley-meal bread, meat from the sacrificed animals, wine and sweetmeats forming the bill of fare, supplemented by wild boar, antelope, deer, and all sorts of game, the spoils of a great hunt organized by Xenophon's sons and his sporting neighbors some days in advance. Was there ever a happier *fête*, where each laid aside his sorrows, his heart-burnings, his little jealousies, his money-making to rejoice in the sweet air gladdened by the sun and in the presence of an unseen Power that hears and guards!

For Xenophon the gods controlled the events of life and had knowledge of the past and future. They could easily be made our friends: they only asked of us offerings of their own gifts, a

grateful heart, and no conscious concealment of the truth when we called upon them to witness our word. This was his religion, and it served him both in bright hours and grey. He was performing a religious sacrifice when the message was brought to him that his son Gryllus had fallen. Xenophon took

the garland from his head, but when the messenger added "nobly" he put it on again saying, "I knew that my son was mortal." Here we see the antique spirit at its best: self-restraint in adversity; preference of noble conduct to happy fortune; recognition that the gods rule wisely.

The Contemporary Review.

E. Martinengo Cesaresco.

THE GREEN FAKIR.

Holland paused in the twilight, and looked upon his handiwork.

Thirteen hours before, a mango grove set desolately upon the skirts of the Ganges *karda*,—the coarse-grassed, sandy jungle that bordered the river in cold weather—had wakened to the bubble of camels. With them had come tent-pitchers, coolies, and shouting orderlies; and over all there had been the eye of Charles Holland, superintendent of Indian police. Now the dusk was falling on a lane of tents that spread below the great trees. One end of the avenue was spanned by a gaudy striped marquee, through whose open door chairs, tables, and tiger-skins, frilled cushions, and a travellers' book-case, were invitingly visible. A flag-staff had been raised before it; the halliards were slack, but there was bunting heaped at its foot. A savory smell of cooking and wood-smoke came from the outskirts of the grove noisy with the voices of *khamsamahs* and the clash of cooking-pots; and before each tent door, raised upon a perch of wood, a clay saucer carried a floating wick. A servant ran down the line as Holland waited; and presently twenty little primitive lamps smoked and twinkled gaily, with a crowning, festive air, through the darkness of the covering trees.

A pony stumbled about the tussocks

outside the grove, and Holland turned to greet its rider as he dismounted. "Ah, Verney," he said; "where are the others?"

"Coming,—pad elephants, two *gharries*, a riding party, and the Commissioner in a dog-cart. By George, you have worked! It is good enough for the Lieutenant-Governor and all his women-folk."

"Think so?" Holland was gratified. "It took some planning and measuring; I don't think the general effect is bad. You'll find a badminton-court levelled in front of the mess-tent. Here," touching a sunken flower-pot at his foot, "is one hole; there," nodding to the flagstaff, "is another, in case the ladies like some fancy putting. And the *chirags* make a neat illumination."

"They smell rather strong," Verney said, sniffing at an odor of oil and lamp-black with a critical nose. "But look—oh yes, they look fine. Well, if *bundobust* could do it, old man, the camp ought to be a success. There is every attraction on the spot, outside the Fair and the pilgrims altogether."

"Ah!" Holland linked arms, and the two men paced down the grove. "That is just what I wanted. You know Mrs. Champneys is coming? Well, I want to distract her attention, to keep her away from the,—the association of the place. She had to come, you know, be-

cause she's governess to the Knowles's children. "Tisn't for the Commissioner I've planned, or Mrs. Roebuck, or any of the rest; but if Nellie Champneys can be kept from remembering things, I shall be satisfied. She nursed my poor wife: she's a brick; it's horrible to think of what her life has been,—and will be."

"Eh? I don't understand," Verney said, puzzled. "Who is Mrs. Champneys?"

"What! You don't remember about Linstock's murder?"

"Linstock? Linstock? Must have been when I was in Burmah. Stop a bit, though; there's a glimmer—. Wasn't Champneys the name of the man who killed him? But I don't really recollect. What was it?"

"I thought you would recall the name, at least," Holland said. "Linstock and Champneys were both in the Public Works, and they came tenting here to Rajghat to survey for Bathurst's scheme of a second dam. They never got on; they had words in the club the night before they started. Champneys was a great soul in some things,—clever, acute, flashes of genius in him—but a mad-tempered, erratic, hot-headed beggar. They had another scene at the riverside, just outside their tent, because Linstock decided for the *bund*, and Champneys against it, and there was a report to be agreed upon. Then Linstock, who was senior, threatened Champneys; and Champneys picked up a table knife and flung it at him, just as he dropped the curtain of his tent on the last word. Linstock stumbled inside, and when his bearer went in, there he was dead, stuck in the back; he must have died on the spot, without Champneys even discovering that his stroke had told."

"Of course, yes; now I know the story; but not till now that it had happened here. Champneys gave himself up, and then thought better, or worse,

of it, and escaped on the way to the central gaol. There was a hue-and-cry for him all over India."

"Yes; that is it. He was never found; he was a dark fellow, and a fine Hindustani scholar; there is no doubt he got away in native dress, and that Mrs. Champneys passed it on to him somehow, when she was allowed to see him at the railway. The preliminary inquiry was held at Harighur, of course, and he was committed for the sessions; the evidence and his own attitude were dead against him. We knew him well; I had something more than a liking for the man; he was a lovable soul. His wife stayed with us for months afterwards, all through Bessie's illness; poor woman, she was like a wounded hare, and yet she clung to a desperate hope that he was somehow, by some miracle, not guilty after all. She holds it still, though it is four years since it happened, and three since I have seen her. For Champneys's sake, and Bessie's, and her own, I want to make the camp lively, and to keep her away from the river and the scene of the murder, which is just above where the pilgrims are now gathered for the Fair. We have to pass it to get into the bazaar. Linstock's relatives in England marked the spot with a stone cross, the fools! It would have been kinder to have let it be forgotten—look, there is the first *gharry*."

They hurried up the track between the little lamps to where, in the last gleams of daylight, a carriage was swaying over the sand hummocks and the grass. It rolled and dipped like a ship in the trough of the sea, and the men heard a runner shouting as he threaded the way, in and out and roundabout, before the horses. Dark moving blurs began to appear against the darkening background, and the trumpeting of an elephant squealed through the still, warm air of the evening.

"Did Champneys die?" Verney asked, as they bustled out.

"No one knows; he only vanished," Holland answered, closing the conversation with his salutation to the visitors. And Verney, when Roebuck the Commissioner, and the Commissioner's wife and daughter, and Sherrold the Collector and his pretty nieces with their following subalterns, and Dr. Knowles and the lesser lights had been attended to, saw him walking beside a little thin woman with children at her skirts, and knew that he had found Mrs. Champneys, and placed his services at her disposal.

II.

The Commissioner beckoned when the ladies left the dinner table for the camp fire outside the marquee, and Holland obediently gathered up his wine-glass and his napkin, and shifted into Mrs. Sherrold's vacant place of honor. Roebuck took coffee, and looked approvingly at the policeman. "I congratulate you," he said. "The desert blossoms like the rose. The ladies are charmed."

"Then I am rewarded, sir," Holland answered. "I should like to know why, of all the hundreds of miles of Ganges country, forty thousand pilgrims should choose this desolate spot from which to bathe and pray at some especial moon."

"My dear sir, where would you find a more favorable place for the erection of a ten days' mushroom city? They have sufficient river frontage for the forty thousand to take their simultaneous dip at Thursday's moonset; and their choice of the sandy *karda* simplifies the question of sanitation. Don't quarrel with the dead devotee who inaugurated the Rajghat Fair. I wanted to ask you how the place is filling."

"The booths are all up, and the merchants and the mendicants are in full

cry," answered Holland. "The pony market is poor this year, but the flocks and herds will change hands briskly. There is no crime as yet. Thirty-two thousand pilgrims have come, so far; we expect six thousand more by the bathing day. The only thing likely to cause a hitch is that the old fakir has a rival."

"There must be many fakirs."

"Oh yes, sir," Holland said. "But the Yellow Fakir,—our original, shouting, irrepressible fanatic—has a Green enemy encamped upon his own favorite location, between the wrestling enclosure and the coppersmiths' shops, and he doesn't like it. The Green *wallah* has an enthusiastic audience; he is grabbing our Yellow friend's disciples and their *pice*. They are both filthy, unkempt, unsavory brutes; I wish we could clear them out altogether."

"H'm," the Commissioner said. "Our place is to safeguard the customs of India, not to disturb them, Mr. Holland. What has Mr. Sherrold decided to do?"

"He has doubled the police patrol, and he has had the booths scattered more widely than usual," was the answer. "If there is trouble, the augmentation of my men, and the decentralization of the Fair ought to make collision easy to settle."

"Just so, very wise. And where has the Yellow Fakir anchored himself?"

"That is the difficulty, sir. He is on the loose. We hope, however, that when he finds the stream of traffic has been diverted, he will betake himself to the camels, or the water-carriers' station, or some other likely corner at which to catch the pilgrims' eye. At present he hovers over his old nook like a bird above a robbed nest. He hasn't the courage to do more at present than gibe at the new light, who is a young fellow with a hideous concretion of ashes and piety upon him; but he does not take kindly to the usurpation, and

you know, sir, religious maniacs have a power—"

"I must go down to the Fair with Mr. Sherrold early to-morrow," Roebuck said, nodding, and brushing his shirt-front. "Yes; they have a power, Mr. Holland; but so have we. And now, shall we join the ladies?"

Scarlet-clad servants rolled up the wall of the tent, and disposed of the temporary division of the company. The women were gathered in a semi-circle of rug-strewn chairs, and they faced a camp fire which was being replenished by half-seen, flitting figures. Holland's lamps had burned themselves out for the time, and behind the leaping flames and the smoke the tents glimmered vague and ghostly, walled by the rampart of trees, and watched through a lacework of branches by the myriad blazing stars of the Indian night.

Mrs. Champneys sat a little apart, on the outer edge of the ring, her hands folded on her lap, her eyes, set deep in a worn face, gazing into the fire. She was a slight, brown-haired woman, unobtrusive, black-robed, but scarcely insignificant even in her isolation. Holland drew a chair through the tent with him, and sat down at her side. She turned her head, and met him with a smile. "Who put the flowers in my tent?" she said. "Who conjured up an *ayah* from the depths of the jungle? You are a very kind friend to me, Charles."

"It is such luck to see you again," Holland answered. "I do hope you will have a pleasant time here. If you want to play badminton, or golf, or ride, or fish, or need anything that it is in my power to give you, let me know, and be sure my pleasure will be in arranging for you. How do you like the Knowles?"

"They are good, busy people," she said evasively.

He looked across the circle at Mrs.

Knowles's fat stolidity, at the doctor's impassive jowl, with a sinking heart. They were not the employers for a sensitive woman. What had she not suffered in the intervening years? And she still believed in, and hoped for Champneys.

"The children are not clever, but they are good little things," Mrs. Champneys was saying. "There! Now I have a favor to ask you. They are very eager to see the Fair. Can you arrange for us to go down to-morrow morning?"

"Why should you go? I can take them myself. They shall have two elephants, and I will see that they are shown everything and brought back before the sun is hot. You shall remain in bed and rest."

"They would lose half the pleasure if I were not with them. Freddy and I are very anxious to inspect the ponies together, and there is a parrot to be chosen for Eileen, and a set of glass bangles for Hilda. They depend on me. Oh, yes, yes, I must certainly go," she said. Then she went on, looking suddenly up at him: "Dear friend, are you afraid I shall suffer? Not more than usual, I assure you. Poor Mr. Linstock! But remember, I believe—I know—that Ernest's was not the hand that killed him. My poor boy might have been a murderer, but he was not; I repeat to you that he was not. He is innocent indeed, though his mad rage brought him very near to destruction. Ah, he repented so bitterly, Charles! And now he is a wanderer somewhere, cut off from me, lost to me, though I begged him to let us communicate if we could."

Holland stared at the fire. He had nothing to say; he could not share in her delusion. There was no hope of Champney's restitution to the world he had once walked in as a man amongst men; if he were still alive, it was with the blood of his colleague on his hands,

and he must go on skulking, hidden from his wife and friends, until his day was done.

"I am not afraid that he is dead," the quiet voice went on. "He will come back to me when the mystery of Mr. Linstock's death is solved; perhaps it is that he is waiting until he can clear himself. He knows that I trust in him, and wait for him; but it is a long time, and the suspense and the longing are very cruel." She looked up through the trees at the deep sky, and smiled faintly. "The stars that shine on me shine on him," she said. "I think that he is near me sometimes; I think it now. It must be the sight of you again, and the recalling, by your voice, of so many dear, happy memories. I wish you thought that I am right, but I shall convince you some day, Charles. And then we,—Ernest and I—shall not forget your many kindnesses, and all your friendship."

She rose; Mrs. Roebuck was saying good-night. Mrs. Champneys held out her hand, and did not seem to notice that Holland's eyes were misty. "Good-night," she said. "Send a *salaam* to my tent when the elephants are ready."

III.

The shouts of the Knowles's children dinned in Holland's ears while he dressed next morning, and he knew before he came out of his tent that they and Mrs. Champneys were not to be balked of their expedition. After all, he found that he had exaggerated the painfulness of it in his over-night mood. The elephants swung out of the camp into the crisp air, their shadows very long before them, with the chatter of their young freight checking the sad memories stirred by the scene of Linstock's death. The children's laughter filled up the time it took to cover the long four miles between the camp and the Fair, and when the party neared

the bathing-place, there was so much to catch the eye in the tented city that Holland was able to hope Mrs. Champneys had scarcely seen the cross among the tussocks, near as they had been obliged to pass by it.

They plunged into the bazaar, and were soon drifting with the stream of humanity that surged past the booths, dazzling in its silver bangles and many-colored tinselled finery, as far as the eye could see. There were the tones of thirty thousand babbling voices, the cries of sweetmeat vendors and cloth and brassware merchants, the laughter of men and women making holiday, and occasionally the drone and the minor chords of some native musicians, or the peremptory thud of a snake-charmer's drum. A spray of human beings tossed upon the edge of the river, bathing, drinking, sousing naked brown babies, filling, in a thousand picturesque attitudes under a brilliant sun, their *lotahs* or their water-pots. Here was a forest of bullock *gharries* gay with crimson trappings; there a sea of *ekkas* (pony carts) more fantastic in shape and equally gaudy. A lute twanged inside the mustard-colored screen that hid a company of mummery; the outskirts of the Fair were busy with the unloading of camels, and the scuffle of little mouse-colored ponies, tripping in with bundles on their backs. The children, who were able from their perch to take in the whole flat landscape at a glance, feasted their eyes and chattered to each other.

Holland leaned forward from the tall seat, the place of sacrifice, on his pad, and pointed out objects of interest to Mrs. Champneys over her shoulder. "Pig and wild-fowl were the population here a month ago," he said. "They will be able to return to their homes three weeks hence. But now—" He swept his arm out, including the whole ant-like swarm of Hindus in his gesture.

"It is religious custom that has brought the people here, I suppose?" said Mrs. Champneys.

"They bathe in the river, yes, and incidentally do some trafficking and merry-making," Holland answered. "They will dip ceremoniously at moon-set on Thursday, and the mothers of sick children, the men with enemies who stalk abroad, the childless wives, the blind, will hope and pray, no doubt, for their hearts' desires. It is a peaceable, self-contained crowd, taking it all round; the disagreeable element lies in a few jealous fakirs, who breed strife and street-riots when they get the chance."

He plunged into the story of the Green and Yellow rivals, painting the battle for the cherished position with a humorous touch, yet reflecting a little gravely as he laughed that the Yellow Fakir's anger had had an ominously unrestrained frenzy in it. Such men had been smitten mad with rage before now, and had run *amok* like rabid dogs; if a man ran *amok* in that unarmed, congested throng, there would be panic, and trouble not easily stamped out by the heel of the law.

The elephants lurched round a corner. The hum of the crowd they encountered beyond it was a semitone lower than the one through which they had rolled. Holland's trained ears noted the difference, and he leaned still further forward. "Stop, *mahout!*" he said.

There were a thousand backs turned to them, a thousand heads shifting below them. Before the human barrier the sun poured upon an open patch with a ragged wall of canvas propped on poles behind it, and a coppersmith's wares flashing and blazing beyond. A figure, cross-legged like Buddha, and like the god passionless and imperturbable, squatted upon the sand in the multitude's view. Another ash-smeared figure rocked and capered towards it.

Shrill spurts of vituperation came from the dancing man, and penetrated the comments and the murmurs of the spectators.

"Ha!" Holland said. "The brutes are at it again. The Yellow Fakir has come back to face his rival. But it won't do. Excuse me a minute, Mrs. Champneys; I must stop this— Where on earth is the inspector? And not a constable in sight, of course!"

He slipped nimbly down the tail of the elephant, and scattered the crowd with his onslaught from the rear. A lane opened before him; Mrs. Champneys saw his sun-hat beat through the *puggarees* and saw them close up again after he had passed. She sat still, explaining the excitement to the children, and waited his return.

Holland pierced the mass, and came upon the scene of action. The Yellow Fakir could see nothing but the cross-legged enemy with the silent sneer; he was edging nearer and nearer to him, like a cock challenging to battle, and his shrill voice screamed and cracked with his exasperation.

"Thou,—who wast a babe unborn when I was already a holy man—*thou*, base one, to set thyself up against me, thy holiness to mine! Thou, to plant thy vile bones in the place I have made sacred, to parade thy sanctity in the face of mine! Where is thy record? What hast thou done that pious men should give honor to thee? Hast fasted as I, walked upon thy knees through the length of Hindustan, hast kept thy lips from aught but water and a little meal, as I?"

"Even so," said the level measured voice, and the sneer remained. "These be but poor things; even this unworthy one hath accomplished them, oh man of gray hairs! Show these assembled brethren better deeds than mine for the faith, and truly they will arise and cast me out. Come!"

Holland's heart gave a great bound,

and the hand that he was upraising remained in the air. He knew the voice; good God! It was impossible to mistake it. He looked, sharply and nearly, at the Green Fakir from behind his rival's back, and he found himself fixed by the eyes of Champneys, undisguised as the tones of his voice, and set in the face of an unrecognizable and naked fanatic. The eyes looked intelligently upon him; there was a flash of appeal in them, deep calling to deep. Yet the Buddha-like sneer sat undisturbed on a brown face smeared with ashes.

The thought that this was Linstock's murderer come to justice did not sting him; but the suddenness of the thing did, for Holland had had the remembrance of an English gentleman brought back to him, and the creature upon whom he looked was fantastically horrible. And close upon the heels of the unexpected mystery was flung the knowledge that Mrs. Champneys was not a hundred yards away, and that she too might see, and show them all what she saw.

Some one had plucked at the Yellow Fakir, and stemmed his torrent by revealing the man in authority. There was a jingle, a clatter, and the inspector and his constables broke through the crowd, chased it, bullied it, and split it into receding units. The Green Fakir gazed upon the tumult with the calm of a disinterested spectator, and tossed a swift, scornful word to his retreating foe. "Show me a better deed for the faith, oh holy man!"

Holland took half a dozen hurried strides towards him, full only of a desire to hide the truth from the wife, and at the same time to put this gross dishonor to the Champneys he had known out of the eyes of the sun and the gaping world.

"Give me to-day,—I only ask a day," said Champneys's voice through closed lips, in English. "'Fore God, Holland,

I shall be a clean man to-morrow! But for Heaven's sake, you, who were my friend, put reliable witnesses into my crowd! That yellow devil shall talk yet."

Holland fell back. The eyes had dropped; there was nothing to be seen but a loathly fakir, nothing to be heard but the patter of his meditations. He realized as he stared that not even a wife could pierce the depths of that disguise. And then, still mazed, still uncertain of what his action should be, he drifted slowly back to the elephants, and found his discovery hustled back to some other thinking time by the voices of Mrs. Champneys and the children. He climbed into the pad, and the little party was rolled away to the further ends of the Fair.

IV.

"But Champneys killed Linstock!" Verney said. "You said there was no doubt, that there could be none. Would he come back, risking so much, and appeal to you after four years?"

He was sitting upon Holland's bed, with the shadows thick about the narrow corners of the tent. And Holland, who had beaten his brains all day against a mystery, now unburdened himself and poured forth his perplexities.

"I did think so, but if there could be a loophole . . . No, it is impossible. Yet, Verney, there is method in this pitting himself against the Yellow Fakir; and I can see it."

"Where?"

"The Yellow Fakir knows something, and Champneys is stirring him to a pitch of rage in which he may be shaken beyond caution, and spit it out. This Green Fakir has dogged the Yellow one for months past, they tell me now; he has rivalled him and baited him incessantly, and always—mark that!—with the never-varying challenge to produce

some proof of greater labor for the faith than he has shown."

"Well?"

"The old man has hinted at things; and there have been jeers, and he has lost ground because he went no further than hinting. The crowning insult of occupying his place is part of the scheme. What does it all mean? And what have the last four years been to Champneys? That creature—that naked savage! . . . Where did he learn the tricks of the beast so minutely? Through what depths has his 'prenticeship not dragged him? He was a passionate-tempered man,—poor erring soul—but he was English, and wholesome, and he was Nellie Champneys's husband. The fakir is a horror to dwell upon. Ugh!" Holland swung about and gripped the tent pole defiantly. "He killed Linstock; how could it be otherwise? But he was my friend, Verney, and he has asked me for this day. He has it. There are some of my men among the lookers-on too, as he wished. If the Yellow Fakir boils up again, and commits an indiscretion, they are there to note it. I give him his day. Afterwards,—I don't know,—my duty—" He made a gesture of despair.

"Cheer up!" Verney said, and sprang to his feet. "Let us get out of this. It is abominably puzzling, and I can see light no more clearly than you. But a man would not descend to a vile disguise,—ay, and as you say, the 'prenticeship which his perfection in it implies—without some cogent reason. It is not the madness of desperation, for every move is planned. I believe, 'pon my word, that I hold with Mrs. Champneys. And now let us get into the fresh air. This tent is about as full of 'baccy smoke as it can be. I have smoked three pipes since you called me in."

They passed into the grove; but they turned instinctively from where the

lane of tents led to the awning, and slipped instead into the far unoccupied dusk of the trees. They were still very busy with their thoughts.

"The inspector was to report to me at sundown. It is past, and he does not come," Holland said presently. "He had explicit instructions enough. His spies were to be picked, and they were to hover and to dodge, and to listen, but there was to be no interference unless there was imminent danger of bloodshed. That is a modification of yesterday's orders, and of Roebuck's wishes; but, you see, Champneys asked for his chance, and he must have it."

"Just so," Verney said. "What is that?"

He pointed his finger towards the plain beyond the grove and the sand-hills, gray and gaunt in the half-light, that swept in waves across it. There was a monkey-like thing running, and stumbling in its haste, over the tussocks towards them. It fell, and rose again; it tossed its arms into the air with gestures of eager haste; and then it shouted, and grew upon the instant into the Green Fakir.

The two men sprang forward simultaneously as the fact dawned upon them. The fakir lurched to their feet, and Holland dragged him up and searched hungrily for the eyes of Champneys. He found them, and with them more, in face and feature, of the man he knew. The Buddha-mask was gone; this was a white man in a brown skin, grotesquely, poorly disguised by hideous stains and daubings, a man who suffered from the humiliation of his nakedness, and who gasped English to them as he regained his breath.

"No one has seen me but you two, eh? Holland, I trust you,—tell this other fellow—where is your tent? I slipped out of the crowd and I ran—I ran—your tent, man!"

"Here," Holland said, and he pushed him into it. Verney loosed the curtain and struck a match. Its flame, leaping up, showed a face working with the pent-up emotion of four years, and he turned away and busied himself with the lamp.

Holland filled a basin, and dropped soap and towel beside it. "You want these?" he said quietly.

"Yes," Champneys said; "I can use 'em now. Four years in hell,—I am going to come back to blessed civilization. Where is Nellie? I know she is here, for I have seen her. Oh, if you knew how hard it has been to keep away from her and let her suffer!" He plunged his face into the water, and began to scrub furiously at the ashes that defiled it.

"But we don't understand as yet," Holland hinted, after a pause filled up by sluicings and the slap of a sponge.

"The Inspector will tell you in a few minutes. I slipped away as he left the bazaar," Champneys said. "The Yellow Fakir has confessed; I forced it out of him. It was his hand that struck down Linstock, and at last,—after this eternity—he has boasted of it openly, given chapter and verse, raved of what he did. You served me well, Holland; there were three of your men within hearing, and when he had come to the end they stepped out and took him into custody. Of course he will stick to it now, for he has claimed the murder as a sign of his zeal for the preservation of Ganga against the pollution of the infidel."

Slowly the brown dye gave way before the vigorous ablutions, and in its place came mottled red and tan, the skin of a sun-baked Anglo-Indian.

"Try vaseline," Verney said. Holland fell to digging a shirt and a suit of clothes out of his camel-trunk. It was their way of expressing belief and sympathy; neither could have found

words in which to frame the sentiment of the moment.

"God knows, it might as well have been I," Champneys went on. "He in His mercy saved me from a fearful crime. I thought at first that I had done it, though I flung the knife wildly and without intent to strike; and I was ready enough to die for it, then. But I *knew* that it went groundwards: I threw it down, and I heard it quiver in the earth. It could not have struck between his shoulders. And then my *sayce*, a poor wretch in trembling fear of the Yellow Fakir, contrived to get access to me, and hint to me of the real truth. He would not have borne witness against the brute, but he had some conscience in him, and when I was free I tracked him down, and wrung out the whole story. The Yellow Fakir had been hanging about the camp all day, full of rage at the tales that had been spread of our mission. We were to tamper with the river, insult it, make it a putrid abomination,—you can fill the lies in for yourself. He saw the knife lying in the doorway of the tent, and Linstock sitting at the table with his back turned to the entrance; and he stabbed him. He has said it in the face of a hundred people, and perhaps poor Buldoo, who witnessed the murder, will have the courage now to come forward and substantiate the matter in court; I can lay my finger on him in half a day. But at least my task is done, and, oh Holland, I have been deadlly heartsick and weary in the doing of it!"

He paused in his dressing and found his hand in the policeman's grip. Holland spoke huskily as he closed his palm over the man's fingers. "Thank God it is done, Champneys! I cannot say how glad I am; I haven't the words; I am a dumb, stupid beast, and your freedom is far more to me than I can express. But there is Nellie, she will be able to show you,—we won't.

keep you from her another moment—
only let us go and break the news, and
send her in."

And as he and Verney stepped again
Macmillan's Magazine.

outside, they saw the inspector loom-
ing through the darkness, with Lin-
stock's murderer led beside him.

Mayne Lindsay.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

The trees are hung with crystal lamps, the wold lies still and white,
And the myriad little twinkling stars are sharp with keener light;
The moon sails up the frost-clear sky and silvers all the snow,
As she did, perchance, that Christmas nigh two thousand years ago!

Good people, are you waking?
Give us food and give us wine,
For the sake of blessed Mary
And her Infant Son Divine,
Who was born the World's Redeemer—
A Saviour, yours and mine!

Long ago angelic harpers sang the song we sing to-day,
And the drowsy folk of Bethlehem may have listen'd as they lay!
But eager shepherds left their flocks, and o'er the desert wild
The kingly sages journey'd to adore the Holy Child!

Has any man a quarrel?
Has another used you ill?
The friendly word you meant to say,
Is that unspoken still?—
Then remember, 'twas the Angels
Brought glad tidings of good-will!

Of all the gifts of Christmas are you fain to win the best?
Lo! the Christ-Child still is waiting Himself to be your Quest;
No lot so high or lowly but He will take His part,
If you do but bid Him welcome to a clean and tender heart!

Are you sleeping, are you waking?
To the Manger haste away,
And you shall see a wondrous sight
Amid the straw and hay—
'Tis Love Himself Incarnate
As on this Christmas Day!

Pall Mall Magazine.

Christian Burke.

THE BIOGRAPHY OF A SNOWFLAKE.

It is one of the most interesting things in connection with the subject of the weather that all its phenomena are so closely in touch with one another, and that in order to explain any one of them it is necessary to take account of all the rest. A further fact is that the various phenomena have a power of transforming themselves very quickly as it were into something else, so that it is often a long process to hunt down and discover what is the fundamental structure of these fugitive shapes. A snowflake, for instance, at first sight might be thought to have a separate existence from any of the other children born of aqueous vapor, but on attempting to follow up the history of these "frozen flowers," as Professor Tyndall called them, it is found that the attention is at once directed to the consideration of such things as rain, hail, sleet, mist, dew, hoar-frost, and clouds. Hail, rain, sleet and snow are, of course, very nearly related indeed, but similarly to the other phenomena they are all built up out of aqueous vapor, and when vapor is condensing out of the atmosphere it is, at some seasons of the year, quite as likely to take one shape as another. Of the phenomena mentioned above, hail is probably the most noisy in its descent from the atmosphere to the earth, and this more especially when it happens to be accompanied by a thunderstorm. On the other hand hoar-frost and snow are probably the quietest of all the children of the air, while as regards their picturesque effects, who would venture to decide between two such skilful artists? Snow, which is the parent of the grinding glacier and the stupendous iceberg, has, however, such notable effects on climate and on weather that few meteorological phe-

nomena can compare with it for interest.

Now, it is probable that, as is the case with a raindrop, or with hail, in order to give a snowflake a start in life there must be a tiny nucleus of dust, round which the condensing vapor may gather. It is mainly a question of temperature as to what form this condensing moisture will take, but commonly when the temperature is above the freezing point rain is the outcome. When this process takes place in a body of air at or about the freezing point, snow gets its opportunity; while when the condensed moisture does not at once freeze solid, hail will be more likely to occur. At some times, indeed, both snow and hail take the form of little fluffy pellets of frozen moisture, and considerable experience is necessary to distinguish between them. As a general rule the colder the weather the smaller the snowflakes; the large flakes, which children describe as being due to the old woman plucking her geese, appearing when the thermometer is not far away from the freezing point. Large flakes, indeed, are a conglomeration of smaller flakes, and it is in the latter that the greatest regularity and beauty of structure are to be seen.

In order therefore that a snowflake may make a successful journey through the atmosphere it should be built up on a particle of dust, while if it should be fortunate enough to commence its career at the top of a cloud soaring many miles above the level of the earth, it will thereby become still better equipped for adding to its stores of frozen vapor. Between the growing snowflake and the earth, it should be borne in mind, there are in ordinary conditions strata of atmosphere that differ very much as regards their tem-

perature, and the amount of moisture they contain. These different layers through which the descending snowflake will pass favor its development, for it often happens that in one layer of atmosphere the flake gathers moisture which is promptly frozen in the succeeding layer. In this connection it is well to recall what happens when one holds a snowball, or two pieces of melting ice in a warm hand for any length of time, for either can be welded into a solid lump by a little pressure, a process commonly called regelation, and to be borne in mind when seeking for the causes that favor the growth of a snowflake.

From each layer of atmosphere through which it passes the fluttering snowflake may therefore be thought of as collecting a tribute of moisture, but unlike a hailstone it makes these accretions in gentle fashion. There is a fuss and a dash with the downward plunge of a hailstone, so that the frozen moisture is welded around it with great force and it quickly grows hard and solid. On the other hand, with a snowflake the frozen moisture is not so much welded as it is enmeshed, for on every snowflake, even in its early moments, there are protuberances and spicules that catch the floating moisture as in a tiny net. The most common forms of snowflake have a solid nucleus with rays ramified in different planes, others taking the shape of six-sided needles or prisms, or six-sided pyramids. A complicated snowflake takes the form of a six-sided prism from one or both ends of which six-sided plates are projected. Another kind of snowflake is found to be simply a thin lamina of frozen moisture, snowflakes of this class being observed in great variety. Many interesting sketches have been made of all these different kinds of snowflakes, but this is work that requires further elaboration by some observer willing to devote

a little time to this most interesting work of taking a picture of the snowflakes as they reach the earth. It has been said that the crystals in any given snowstorm have a family likeness, each storm, as it were, having its own particular type of snowflake. This is an interesting point to be settled only by careful observation, and for the present it is enough to recognize the fact that although snowflakes seem all very much alike yet there is endless variety in these "lovely blossoms of the frost."

It will be seen, then, that the conditions most favorable for the production of large snowflakes are when the atmosphere is freezing in some parts and thawing in others. With these conditions the process of regelation of moisture on the surface of the snowflake will proceed apace. Under such favorable circumstances very large flakes may be built up, although, as already mentioned, these large structures are often but the result of flakes that have collided in mid air and joined forces. These large snowflakes are like very large hailstones, which are often but a mass of ice formed by several hailstones crushed together. Both as regards the snowflake and the hailstones, these conglomerates are not properly to be taken as showing to what size a single flake or stone may grow. With this proviso it may be stated that one of these conglomerate snowflakes was found to measure $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in thickness; the flake when melted yielded $2\frac{1}{2}$ cubic inches of water. Such large snowflakes as this cannot come to maturity when the atmosphere is of a very low temperature all through. In such circumstances there are no alternate layers of air of varying conditions in temperature and moisture, and as a result only small, dry flakes of snow are produced. This is the kind of snow that falls in the polar regions, and it is these cold weather snowflakes

that are the most perfect in form. Closely allied to the small and the large snowflakes is sleet. This commonly is objugated as the most unpleasant of all the children born of the atmosphere, but it will perhaps be seen that rightly to understand the whole story of a snowflake, something of the changes in temperature that produce sleet need to be taken into account.

When lying on the ground, snow, from a meteorological point of view, is of much greater interest than when falling through the air. In an ordinary way there is a constant exchange of heat between the surface of the earth and the atmosphere. Thus during the day the sun pours its warmth down through the air to the earth, so that the surface of the ground is raised in temperature. During the night hours this acquired warmth is rapidly radiated into space, and the temperature of the earth accordingly falls. The atmosphere, moreover, that is everywhere in the closest intimacy with the ground, is also affected by this prodigal behavior of the earth. Now, when the ground is wrapped round in its mantle of snow, these imports and exports of heat to and from the earth are interrupted. In other words, the diurnal range of temperature is greatly modified, so that all the time snow is on the ground there is not that excessive expenditure of heat that ordinarily takes place, and as a result the soil beneath the snow is maintained at an equable temperature.

Anyone who has been on the snow a few thousand feet above the level of the sea will have recognized the fact that snow is a good radiator of heat. At such a height, moreover, the atmosphere is dry and free from dust, so that as the heat rays pass through the air, to and from the surface of the snow, they have but little effect as regards raising the temperature of the air. Air such as this is said to be diatherma-

nous, and heat rays passing through such territory, so to speak, pay no toll. Similarly snow, so long as it remains clean and free from impurities, reflects the heat rays, but will not absorb them. Supposing, however, that a little dirt or a plentiful supply of coal-dust settles on such snow, heat is at once absorbed, and the "frozen flowers" are destroyed. That the snow is white is considered to be due to the fact that the ice crystals of which each individual snowflake is built up, act as so many miniature prisms that blend the prismatic colors and so scatter a white light. In its embrace also, each snowflake, as it lies upon the ground, holds a tiny supply of air, and it is this circumstance that makes the snow so bad a conductor of heat. Snow then in regard to the earth and the atmosphere acts as a buffer state, so that it passes no heat down from above and allows none to travel upwards from below.

Further, not only is snow of interest in the manner of its birth and in respect of its sojourn on the earth, but its actions are no less entertaining when it melts. In passing it may be observed that one foot of snow is considered to be equal to ten or twelve inches of rain. When, therefore, snow is on the ground to the depth of several feet there is an enormous quantity of moisture held in suspension. It is not surprising then that when a sudden thaw sets in, the water courses and rivers are unable to carry off the melting snow, and that floods result. At times, too, it will happen that the ground in the neighborhood of fallen snow is frozen hard, so that as the snow melts it rushes impetuously onwards, disastrous floods being again produced. When the snow disperses in orderly fashion it percolates through the ground, and it will readily be understood that as the cold icy water passes downwards notable modifications occur in the temperature of the

soil. At such times undrained land becomes saturated with the chilly water, and for this and other reasons it has been observed that the effect of draining land is the same as if it had been removed one hundred miles to the southward. It is not, therefore, surprising that in many countries considerable attention is given to the work of observing the snow, so that ample warning may be given to those whom it may concern of the time when it is beginning to melt.

Both when on the ground and when it melts it will therefore be seen that

Knowledge.

snow is constantly modifying the temperature of its surroundings. On the winds also which blow to and from the snow-covered areas these changes have also their effects, so that in studying climatic conditions it is imperative to know the times and seasons when a given locality is covered with snow. As already mentioned, to follow the biography of a snowflake to the end, something should be said concerning glaciers and icebergs; but it is sufficient for present purposes to call attention to them, with the observation that they were built by the snowflakes.

Arthur H. Bell.

WATCHING THE STARLINGS.

The final end and aim of all the gatherings, flights, circlings and other "skiey" evolutions of starlings at the close of each day is, of course, the entry into that dark wood where in "numbers numberless" yet packed into a wonderfully small space, they pass the night, clinging beneath every leaf, like the dreams that Vergil speaks of. This entry they accomplish in various ways. Sometimes, but rarely, they descend out of their brown firmament in one perpetual rushing stream which seems to be sucked down by a reversed application of the principle on which the column of a water-spout is sucked up from ocean; but their general plan is to settle, somewhere, in the neighborhood of their sleeping-place before finally passing to it. They may swarm into the adjacent hedges along the line of which they move like uproarious rivers of violent life and joy, in them and just above them, and should there happen to be another thicket or plantation, a field or so from their chosen one, it is much their habit

to enter this first and fly from it to the latter. This passage from the ante or drawing-room to the dormitory is an interesting thing to watch, but it does not take place till after a considerable interval, during which the birds talk and seem to be preparing themselves for going to bed. At last they are ready or the proper time has arrived. The sun has sunk and the still evening waits for the stealing night. The babbling sing-song, though swollen, now, to its greatest volume, seems—such are the harmonies of nature—to have more of silence in it than of sound, but all at once, it changes to a sudden roar of wings as the birds whirl up and fly across the intervening space to their final resting-place. It seems then as though all had risen at one and the same moment, but, had they done so, the plantation would now be empty whilst the entire sky above it would be darkened by an immense host of birds. This, however, is not the case. There is, indeed, a continuous stream of them from the planta-

tion, but all or most of the while that it is flowing the plantation itself must be stocked with still vaster numbers, since it takes, as a rule, about half an hour for it to become empty. It is drained, in fact, as a broad sheet of water would be by a constant narrower outflow, taking the actual water to represent the birds. Thus, though the exodus commences with suddenness, it is gradually accomplished, and this gives the idea of method and sequence in its accomplishment. The mere fact that a proportion of the birds resist, even up to the last moment, the impulse to flight, which so many rushing pinions but just above their heads may be supposed to communicate, suggests some reason for such self-restraint, and gradually, as one watches—especially if one comes night after night—the reason begins to appear. For a long time the current of flight flows on uninterruptedly, hiding with its mantle whatever of form or substance may lie beneath. But at last the numbers begin to wane, the speed, at least in appearance, to flag, and it is then seen that the starlings are flying in bands of comparatively moderate size, which follow each other at longer or shorter intervals. Sometimes there is a clear gap, which may be wide or narrow, between band and band, sometimes the leaders of the one are but barely separated from the laggards of the other, sometimes they overlap but, even here, their existence is plain and unmistakable. This, as I have said, is towards the end of the flight. On most occasions as on this that I have been imagining, nothing of the sort is to be seen at its beginning. There is a sudden outrush and no division in the continuous line is perceptible. Occasionally, however, the exodus begins in much the same way as it ends, one troop of birds following another, until soon there ceases to be any interval between them. But though this band

formation is now masked to the eye, one may suppose that it still exists and that, as there are unseen currents in the ocean, so this great and apparently promiscuous stream of birds is made up of innumerable small bands or regiments which, though distinct and capable at any moment of acting independently, are so mingled together that they present the appearance of an indiscriminate host moving without order and constructed upon no more complex principle of subdivision than that of the individual unit. There is another phenomenon to be observed in these last flights of the starlings which appears to me to offer additional evidence of this being the case. Supposing there to be a hedge or any other shelter in the birds' course, one can, by stooping behind it, remain concealed or unthought of whilst they pass directly overhead. One then notices that there is a constant and, to some extent, regular rising and sinking of the rushing noise made by their wings. It is like rush after rush, a maximum roar of sound, quickly diminishing, then another roar, and so on in unvarying or little varying succession. Why should this be? That at more or less regular intervals those birds that happened to be passing just above one should fly faster, thereby increasing the sound made by their wings, and that this should continue during the whole flight does not seem likely. It would be method without meaning. But supposing that, at certain points, the living stream were composed of greater multitudes of birds than in the intermediate spaces, then, at intervals, as these greater multitudes passed above one, there would be an accentuation of the uniform rushing sound. Now, in a moderate-sized band of starlings, flying rapidly, there is often a thin forward or apex end, which increases gradually, or sometimes rather suddenly to the maximum bulk in the

centre, and a hinder or tail end decreasing in the same manner. If hundreds of these bands were to fly up so quickly, one after another, that their vanguards and rearguards became intermingled or even a little absorbed into the rest, yet still the numbers of each main body ought largely to preponderate over those of the combined portions, so that here we should have a cause capable of producing the effect in question. The starlings then—this, at least, is my own conclusion—though they seem to fly all together, in one long string, really do so in regiment after regiment, and moreover there is a certain order—and that a strange one—by which these regiments leave the plantation. It is not the first ones—those, that is to say, that are stationed nearest the dormitory—that lead the flight out, but the farthest or back regiments rise first and fly successively over the heads of those in front of them. Thus the plantation is emptied from the farther end and that part of the army which was, in sitting, the rear, becomes, in flying, the van. This, at least, seems to be the rule or tendency and precisely the same thing is observable with rooks, though in both it may be partially broken and thus obscured. One must not, in the collective movements of birds expect the precision and uniformity which characterize drilled human armies. It is, rather, the blurred image of, or confused approximation towards, this that is observable, and this, perhaps, is still more interesting.

One more point; and here again, rooks and starlings closely resemble each other. It might be supposed that birds thus flying in the dusk of evening, to their resting-place, would be anxious to get there and that the last

thing to occur to them would be to turn round and fly in the opposite direction. Both here, however, and in the flights out in the morning, we have that curious phenomenon of breaking back, which, in its more salient manifestations, at least, is a truly marvellous thing to behold. With a sudden whirr of wings, the sound of which somewhat resembles that of a squall of wind, still more, perhaps, the crackling of sticks in a huge blaze of flame, first one great horde and then another tears apart, each half wheeling round in an opposite direction, with enormous velocity and such a general seeming of storm, stir and excitement as is quite indescribable. This may happen over and over again and each time it strikes one as more remarkable. It is as though a tearing hurricane had struck the advancing host of birds, rent them asunder and whirled them to right and left with the most irresistible fury. No act of volition seems adequate to account for the thing. It is like the shock of elements, but the birds are their own hurricane, and they rage in order. Having divided and whirled about in this gusty, fierce fashion, for a moment or so, they seem to hang and crowd in the air, and then—the exact process of it is hardly to be gathered—they reunite and continue to throng onwards. Sometimes, again, a certain number, flashing out of the crowd, will wheel sharply round in one direction and descend in a cloud on the bushes they have just left. In these sudden and sharply localized movements we have, perhaps, fresh evidence of that division into smaller bodies which may possibly underlie all great assemblies either of starlings or other birds.

Edmund Selous.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

A biography that will live, of a man whose memory is enduring, is Bishop William Lawrence's "Roger Wolcott". (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.) Written with affection but without exaggeration, compact, clear-cut, it reflects in its form and style something of the simplicity and singular beauty of the life which it commemorates. Roger Wolcott's life was one of high and fine ideals, nobly realized, and this record of it furnishes a sort of moral tonic to any who are concerned over the decadence of American public life or public men.

It would appear that, in spite of what is said or thought to the contrary, people do read sermons. The "Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit," of London recently printed the 2,500th sermon by the late C. H. Spurgeon. This means that each week for forty-eight years an original sermon by him has been printed. Moreover, the publishers have on hand sufficient unpublished manuscripts to enable them to issue a sermon a week for many years to come.

Capital verses for children, set off with capital pictures,—the verses by Abbie Farwell Brown and the pictures by Fanny V. Cory—are contained in the daintily printed little book "A Pocketful of Posies" which Houghton, Mifflin & Co. publish. Both writer and artist have a sympathy with children's moods which enables them at once to interpret and gratify them. There is fun here, and sentiment of a sort, and a pleasing fancy, making a delightful combination.

Mothers who find the old nursery classics too gruesome and gory for bed-

time reading will welcome "In Happy Far-Away Land," in which Ruth Kimball Gardiner re-tells the familiar stories in modern prose, with fantastic combinations and ingenious detail of just the sort to delight young children, incidentally eliminating the horrors and at the same time teaching helpful lessons in everyday manners and morals. A profusion of illustrations by Howard Smith adds to the attractiveness of the volume. Zimmerman's, New York.

The heroine of "Signora, A Child of the Opera House," is a tiny waif, deserted by its mother at the stage-door of a metropolitan opera house, adopted by the eccentric old doorkeeper and cared for by him in his room under the roof, and growing up as the pet and protégée of company after company. The first half of the story is exceedingly attractive, but the same intimate knowledge of life behind the scenes which enables the writer—Gustav Kobbé, the well-known musical critic—to fill out his ingenious plot with so much fascinating detail, has tempted him to introduce an excess of gossip and chit-chat in the later chapters, so that the result is less artistic than it promised to be. R. H. Russell.

If Luck and Chance did not make such sport with the fortunes of the current historical novels, one would predict a real popular success for Molly Elliot Seawell's "Francezka." A story of the time of Louis XV, told by one Babache, captain of the body-guard to Count Maurice of Saxe, and centering in the romance of a wilful young heiress of Brabant, beloved by two brothers of a resemblance striking enough to confuse their identity—it is full of

color and spirit, and holds the interest of the hardened novel-reader with a firmness surprising to himself. The denouement, in particular, shows unusual feeling for artistic effect. A conspicuous figure in the historical background is Voltaire. The Bowen-Merrill Co.

In refreshing contrast to the labored tediousness of much of our modern fiction is Booth Tarkington's new novel, "The Two Vanrevels." Time and space are still essential concepts, of course, and Mr. Tarkington pauses long enough to fix his scene in Southern Indiana, at the time of the Mexican War, but he gets at his story with the very minimum of descriptive delay and does not relax his hold on the reader's attention for an instant. A real love-story it is, with a wilful, capricious, captivating heroine, a David-and-Jonathan pair of lovers, and a gambler of an old father for the villain. A confusion of identity furnishes the mystery of the plot, the character-drawing is admirable, and the atmosphere breathes the mellowness of the South. But it is in the exuberance and spontaneity of the book that its chief charm lies. McClure, Phillips & Co.

Timely, and full of information as well as interest, is "The Spirit of the Ghetto," in which Hutchins Hapgood writes of the old men and boys, the women, orthodox and socialist, the teachers and cantors, rabbis and scholars, the poets and actors, novelists and newspaper-writers of the East Side Jewish Quarter of New York. Mr. Hapgood's standpoint is that of the friendly and sympathetic observer and his descriptions are quite free from the condescension which sometimes obtrudes itself into philanthropy or the levity which betrays the mere quest for "copy." The chapter called "Old and New," in which the diverse influences

that are shaping the development of the rising generation are contrasted with the traditions still followed by their grandfathers, is particularly fresh and suggestive. Illustrations from life, by Jacob Epstein, emphasize the individuality of the book. Funk & Wagnalls Co.

Full of shifting light and shade, the title of Bettina von Hutten's much-talked-of story, "Our Lady of the Beeches," befits its theme. The Lady is the brilliant young wife of an Austrian nobleman, writing *incognito*, from her retreat among her beeches, to a distinguished American scholar whose books have attracted her, and the correspondence between them, full of quaint and sprightly comment on life and its conventionalities, makes by far the most satisfactory half of the slender volume. The instrument appointed of fate to bring about the meeting between them is an old French maid of hers, in search of a recreant husband, who proves to be a backwoods guide of his, and the disclosure takes place in the Maine woods. From that point their author tells their story for them, bringing it to a conclusion which is none the less ineffective for being inevitable. The Baroness von Hutten has a deft touch, but her work somehow recalls to the discontented reader that unfortunate heroine of Mr. Howells', who essayed the milliner's art, and whose bonnets were said to be "all touch." Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Of the group of new writers who are winning distinction by their studies of child-life, McClure, Phillips & Co. count the two foremost on their list, and between them it would be hard to choose. Both observe closely, and with a keen eye to the grown people they address as well as the children they describe; both write with unusual

vivacity; and both have tears as well as smiles at command. But, clever as Josephine Dodge Daskam's work is, in the rare quality of simplicity George Madden Martin's surpasses it. Her "Emmy Lou" won the hearts of hundreds of readers, at her first appearance in "McClure's Magazine", two years ago—a little First Reader girl then—and she has grown more and more dear and real as she has climbed from grade to grade with her valentines and spelling-matches and licorice-sticks and free-hand drawing, till now she has reached the High School and learned that she is pretty. The volume in which the ten charming sketches are collected will be welcomed with the warmth of genuine personal affection. The illustrator, Charles Louis Hinton, has been remarkably successful in catching childish poses and expressions.

Col. Thomas Wentworth Higginson's sketch of John Greenleaf Whittier in the English Men of Letters series of the Macmillans will not displace Mr. Pickard's more elaborate biography, but its modest proportions as well as the grace of its style make it easy reading. The element of personal acquaintance enters into this, as well as into Col. Higginson's recently published volume on Longfellow in the series of American Men of Letters. He knew Whittier well, as man, poet and reformer, and is as well qualified as any one now living to depict him adequately in all three relations. The book is a welcome addition to a singularly attractive series.

There is a virility and a wholesomeness of tone in Dr. James M. Ludlow's group of essays on "Incentives for Life" which makes one mourn that the book is least likely to be read by those who need it most. Dr. Ludlow regards degeneration of manhood as the most serious peril to society, and an un-

trained will as the secret of degeneracy. In this volume he treats of weakness of will as a diseased condition, and considers at length and in a cogent style, abounding with illustrations, the incentives for life which accompany a good conscience; and the various substitutes for conscience, such as apparent expediency, other people's consciences, conventional morality and the rest. The temper of the book is excellent, and the keenness and vivacity of the style save it from being dull. Fleming H. Revell Co.

In glittering blue-and-gold, recalling the delights of the first "Fairy Book," comes "The Book of Romance," edited by Andrew Lang, with some fifty full-page illustrations by H. G. Ford of "Fairy Book" fame, and eight colored plates for a crowning joy. Gracefully linking the new volume to its predecessors by remarking that "romances are only fairy tales grown up," Mr. Lang prefaces with a few pages of explanatory notes the stories which Mrs. Lang paraphrases in simple, pleasant prose. The Round Table legends fill about a third of the volume; the remaining two hundred and fifty pages is divided among Roland, Diarmid, Robin Hood, William Shortnose, Wayland the Smith and Grettir the Strong. The boys and girls will be sure to call for Green and Red and Yellow "Romance Books" to follow. Longmans, Green & Co.

The latest "American invasion" reported from London is that of an unnamed American who bore away in triumph from a recent sale a unique collection of books comprising seven hundred lots. The collection embraced thirty-two examples of Caxton's press, mostly from William Morris's library, and three books issued by the Oxford press in the fifteenth century. The first Oxford book was the "Tyrannius

Rufinus," the earliest of all (1468 for 1478) issued from the press. The second book was the *editio princeps et unica* of the "Latin Commentary on the Lamentations of Jeremiah," made by John Lothbury (1482), with wood cut border. The third was the "Explana-tiones notabiles denotissimi" of Richard Rolle of Hampole (1483), said to be the only one of four copies not in a public library, and the price paid for the last named volume at the Inglis sale in 1900 was £300.

Characteristic of the religious thought of the day is a class of books which, waiving the discussion of theological problems, aim to concentrate the attention of the candid readers on the plain, ethical teaching of the Founder of Christianity and on the answer which it makes to human nature's needs. Noticeable among such books is "Jesus' Way," by President Hyde of Bowdoin College, in which are grouped, under such headings as "Faith: The Grasp of the Way," "Love: The Law of the Way," and "Blessedness: The Reward of the Way," two hundred or more passages from the Synoptic Gospels. The writer's comment is clear, fresh, stimulating, and admirably adapted for the purpose he has in view. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

In "The Reflections of Ambrosine," Ellnor Glyn, author of "The Visits of Elizabeth," sketches the career of a beautiful but portionless young girl, of mingled French and English parentage, trained by her French grandmother according to old-school standards of manners and conduct, driven by the grandmother's suddenly impending death to a *mariage de convenance* with a vulgar Englishman of newly-made wealth, and meeting too late the kinsman of taste and breeding

like her own for whom her guardian's original plan had destined her. The society on which Ambrosine reflects, in her journal, is incredibly sordid and base, but her "reflections" are clever enough. Harper & Bros.

Writing in his eightieth year, with a mind richly stored with the fruits of observation and experience, but with a spirit eternally young and buoyant, Edward Everett Hale has recorded his "Memories of a Hundred Years", which the Macmillan Co. publish in two attractive and profusely illustrated volumes. It is briefly the story of the nineteenth century in the United States which is here told, with a vivacity, a piquancy, a genius for seizing upon salient facts and putting them in the fewest words rarely equalled. Dr. Hale's own recollections extend over at least seven decades of the century and are supplemented by those of his father, and by family papers, for the earlier period, so that the personal element is strong throughout. Dr. Hale's Americanism is as robust at eighty as it could have been at twenty, and he unfolds the panorama of the national development, depicts the great events and the great men who shaped them, and fills in details of social, industrial, and literary progress with an unflagging interest which his readers will discover to be contagious. Doubtless a more orderly history might have been written, if Dr. Hale had been concerned with so grave a matter as the orderly writing of history, but it would scarcely have been as entertaining. His very asides, his bits of personal opinion, his abrupt changes from the past to the present, and the flavor of humor which gives piquancy to the whole add to the charm of the volumes. A fine photogravure portrait of the author looks out at the reader from the frontispiece.

LINES WRITTEN IN LONDON.

If you should cross the moor to-day—
By the old track I mean—
And if you meet me on the way
No ghost will you have seen.

For here it is my ghost does flit,
While, from these shadows far,
On heathered hills with sunbeams lit
I am where now you are.

Ella Fuller Maitland.

The Spectator.

WHO IS SHE THAT COMETH?

Who is she that cometh from the wa-
ters of the west?
Who is she that cometh from the land
beyond the sea
With eyes of waking spring-tide, full
of April's bright unrest?
Wandering winds and waters, tell me,
who is she?

Who is she that cometh with the wind
about her blown,
Restless raiment gleaming full of col-
ors of the sea,
Green as under-curve of wave, white
as waters overthrown,
Wandering winds and waters, tell me,
who is she?

Who is she that cometh with the dawn
upon her brow,
Dawn of April moving with white foot-
steps o'er the sea
To light the land with glory of green
branch and leafy bough?
Wandering winds and waters, tell me,
who is she?

Who is she that cometh all among the
bannered throng—
Triumph of bright banners o'er the
sand dunes by the sea—
Who is she that wakens my wild harp
to wondering song?
Wandering winds and waters, tell me,
who is she?

O my heart! she cometh—she whom
thou hast seen in dream
In lonely moonlight wandering by
shimmering gray sea,

Yet not for thee her coming, nor for-
thee the April gleam:
Only winter winds and waters, heart,
for thee!

Wilfrid W. Gibson.

THE FISHERMAN'S SONG.

I'm sittin' in my li'll boat;
The lines is to the stern;
And all my thoughts are full of 'ee
Whichever way I turn.

If you was this here li'll boat
And I was but the sea,
Aw, my dear life, I tell 'ee, though,
It should be fine for thee.

My curling waves around the keel
Should dance with happy light;
I'd bear 'ee past the sunken rocks
And bring 'ee home all right.

I'm sittin' in my li'll boat;
The gulls is in the sky;
Aw, dear, if I was one of they,
I knaw which way I'd fly.
Mark Guy Pearse.

THE GATE OF HEAVEN.

Whither leads the gateway
That stands at the top of the hill,
With bars against the sky?
A child, I dreamed thereby
To enter Heaven straightway.
I am old, but I know still
That the edge of the world is there,
And beyond is Paradise,
The land that is more fair
Than the wisdom of the wise,
I know it; for did I climb
In my beggar-clouts of sin,
And gross with this world's grime,
I could not enter in,
Though I waited times and a time,
Nor sight of glory nor sound
Of rapture should reach me there;
Only the common ground,
Only the old despair.

F. W. Bourdillon.

